

T H E
Divine or Apostolical
INSTITUTION,
A N D
Power of Jurisdiction

O F T H A T
Sacred Order of Men in the Church
of C H R I S T now call'd
B I S H O P S.

Fully prov'd from Scripture, Fathers, and the
Fundamental Laws of this Realm. Wherein
every Objection of the *Dissenters* of all Sorts, is
candidly examin'd, and fairly confuted.

W I T H T H E
Sentiments of the most Learned Foreigners on
S E P A R A T I O N; and their express Censure of the
Dissenters for withdrawing themselves from the Com-
munion of the C H U R C H O F E N G L A N D; viz.
Calvin, Beza, Grotius, Le Moyne, De l'Angle, &c. As
also the Opinions of the most celebrated *Puritans* on
the Nature and Heinousness of S C H I S M; as *Gifford,*
Parker, Baxter, Calamy, &c.

By a Presbyter of the Church of *England.*

Πάντες τῷ Ἐπισκόπῳ ἀκολουθεῖτε ὡς ᾿Ιησοῦς Χριστὸς τῷ Πατρί.
Ignat. Epist. ad Smyrnaeos.

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TIT. I. 5.

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.



So great Importance and Necessity to the edifying of the Body of Christ, and the perfecting of the Saints, is the Institution, and Exercise of the Ministerial Function; that the Apostle, St. Paul, left Titus in Crete; for this very End: For, although there were a great many Teachers, or Professours of the Word in that Island already; that pretended to know God, v. 16. and; to walk in his Ways, Josh. 22. 5. Micah 4. 3. yet he knew assuredly, as well from the Information of God's Holy Spirit, as his own common Observation when he was among them, that this Profession of theirs was but deceitful and vain, v. 10. because they were not only too apt to gain-say the faithful Word, v. 9. and; especially, that necessary Part of it which teacheth us the Divine Institution of the Ministerial Function; but were likewise unruly, and disobedient, v. 10, 16. and consequently, wanted very much to be better set in order, or instructed, both as to the Institution, and Exercise; of so important a Trust; and therefore, for this Cause, or, upon these two Accounts, saith the Apostle, *left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, as I had appointed thee.*

From the Words you'll very readily observe, that the Apostle left Titus in Crete to do these two things.

B

I. First;

I. *First*, To set in order the things which were wanting ; or, to exercise the Power of *Jurisdiction*, in that Church ; as he was their Bishop, or, Supreme Spiritual Governour, and Ruler, at that Time. And

II. *Secondly*, To ordain Elders in every City ; or, to constitute, and appoint, a standing Ministry, as the Apostle had appointed him.

First then, The Apostle left Titus in Crete to set in Order the things that were wanting ; or, to exercise the Power of *Jurisdiction*, in that Church, as he was their Bishop, or, supreme spiritual Governour, and Ruler, at that Time.

And, as he was invested with this legislative and executive Power then, as being distinct from, and superiour to, all the rest of that Church, both in Order and *Jurisdiction* ; so, I do not find but that every other Christian Church throughout the World, which admits of a Divine, or Apostolical Model of Church Government, owns this Power to be of lasting Importance, and a perpetual Precedent too for every one of them still ; and, especially, the truly Apostolical Church of God, the establish'd Church of *England*, as I shall endeavour to make very evidently appear, in the Sequel of this Discourse, to every impartial and Christian Reader.

In the mean time, as there cannot be, at this Day, any more than there was, in St. Paul's Time, a regular Execution of this Power without Persons lawfully ordained to it, it will be convenient for me to invert the Order of the Words, and to shew,

I. *First*, That there is a Power still left with the Governours and Rulers of Christ's Church, such as Titus was, to ordain Elders in every City ; or, to constitute and appoint a standing Ministry ; and, that this Power is distinct from, and superiour to, either Elders or Presbyters, Priests, or Deacons, strictly so called. And after I have fully dispatch'd this, I shall proceed to discourse as fully upon the other general Proposition.

First then, That there is a Power still left with the Governours and Rulers of Christ's Church, such as Titus was, to ordain Elders, or to constitute and appoint a standing

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standing Ministry, is plain from * *Ephes. 4. ver. 11, 12.* where the Apostle tells us, that he, (i. e. Christ Jesus) gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastours and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ: For, it is indisputably evident, that, as it was highly necessary the Body of Christ should be perpetually edified; so it was no less necessary that the same Orders of Men should be perpetually continued for promoting such Edification; and none of them were allowed to undertake the Promotion of it, or to assume the Ministerial Function upon them for this End, unless they were lawfully called; that is, unless they were regularly commissioned to this great Work by the Successors of the Apostles, or the supreme Governors and Rulers of Christ's Church; which we shall prove to be Bishops, as clearly as we can prove a perpetual or standing Ministry: For, it is undeniably manifest, that this Divine Authority, or supreme spiritual Power, was conveyed to their Successors by the Apostles themselves, by the Rite of Imposition of Hands: And, that it was to be transmitted in a direct Line of Succession † throughout all the Ages of the Church, is as manifest, since it was undoubtedly exercised by the supreme Governor of *Ephesus* as well as *Crete*. Thus St. Paul to Timothy, 1 Epist. c. 5. v. 22. Lay hands suddenly on no Man; and more expressly to Titus, in the Words of my Text, For this Cause left I Thee in Crete, that Thou shouldest — ordain Elders in every City; as the Apostles had ordained Elders in other Churches, Acts 14. 14, 23.

But further, I shall make it fully and particularly appear, that we have the Suffrage and Sense of the Primitive Church sufficiently attested, by an uninterrupted Practice pursuant to it, not only for four or five of the first and best Centuries; but likewise, if it were necessary, I could produce the most authentick and received Authorities all along afterwards, for Fifteen Hundred Years together; and then, and not 'till then, among those many great Advantages that accrued to Christ's Church upon the Reformation, by the Subtilty of the Devil, and Mens too ambitiously affecting ‡ a Parity in the Ministry,

* vid. St. Ambrose's Comment upon this Text. Christian Institutes, p. 128.

† Bishop of Chester's Epist. to Mr. D. Cl. Prim. Episc.

arose up one very great Disadvantage to it, viz. a bold (a) Denial of the supreme Order of Bishops, which, if not timely prevented, or watchfully guarded against, may, in time, efface or sap the very Foundation of (b) Christianity it self.

And now that I may make all this fully and particularly appear, as I said, or shew the supreme Order of Bishops to be truly Divine or Apostolical (c), and distinct from that of either Presbyters or Elders, Priests or Deacons, strictly so called; I shall beg leave to proceed in the following Method.

1. First, I shall set down the different Titles, or Names the Apostles, or Apostolical Men, the Bishops, in the first Age of the Church, or in the Apostles time, went under, and stiled themselves by in holy Scripture, and prove from expresse Passages of it, that, notwithstanding their giving themselves the different Titles or Names of Bishops, Elders, Presbyters, or Deacons, they were Ministers of the first or highest Order in the Church of Christ, strictly speaking, at that time; (i. e.) they were actually Apostles, or, what we now call Bishops.

2. Secondly, I shall prove this first or highest Order from the most eminent Fathers of the first and purest Centuries, and consequently, their Authority in the present Case, must be looked upon as infallible, or convincing to all succeeding Generations.

3. Thirdly, and lastly, I shall prove that the Church of England in particular, hath always embraced this supreme Hierarchy, pursuant to Apostolical Canon and Practice from the first Planting of Christianity amongst us; and doth still embrace and injoy the uninterrupted Practice and Con-

(a) Non aliunde Hæreses obortæ sunt, aut nata sunt schismata, quam inde, quod Sacerdoti Dei non obtemperatur. Cyp. Ep. 55. p. 138. & L. 1. Ep. 3. Inde Schismata & Hæreses obortæ sunt, dum Episcopus, qui unus est, contemnitur. Ep. 69.

(b) Athanasius, and several other of the Primitive Saints and Fathers, frequently inform us, that there can be no Christians, neither can the Church of Christ subsist without Bishops.

Athanas. Epist. ad Dracontium. Tom. I. p. 264, 265. Ignatii Epist. ad Smyrnenf. &c.

(c) For, where there is Jus Apostolicum (saith one) there is, and must be Jus Divinum to support it; and Bishops, in their coordinate state, are, by consequence, of Divine Institution. Vid. Epist. before Cl. Prim. Episc. p. 4.

Mr. Baxter saith likewise, that there is an Episcopacy which he cannot deny to be of Divine Right; — or, that which Christ by himself and his Spirit, in his Apostles, instituted. Baxt. Ch. Hist. of Bishops, &c. p. 22.

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Continuance of it under the strictest Obligations of both Conscience and Law.

First then, I shall endeavour to prove, that altho' the Apostles, or Apostolical Men the Bishops, were sometimes stiled Ministers of the lower Orders in holy Scripture; yet that they were actually Bishops, or of the supreme Order in Christ's Church at the very same time they were so stiled.

I shall begin with the lowest, or with their calling themselves *Deacons* first. And that the Apostles, or Apostolical Men the Bishops, sometimes went under this Name; or were called *Ministers*, or *Deacons*, which, in the Original, signify the same, when they were actually Bishops, is unquestionably manifest from St. Paul himself, who, in most of his Epistles, when he was *behind none of the Apostles*, as he saith, either in Power or Dignity (2 Cor. 11. 5.) was pleased to stile himself after this manner.

I shall begin with his Epistle to the *Romans*, and quote them in order, as they are set down throughout the New Testament.

In his 15th Chapter of that Epistle, at the 16th Verse, he calls himself *Minister of Jesus Christ*. And, that Minister, in the Original, signifieth a Deacon, you read 1 Ep. Cor. 3. 5. where he saith, *who is Paul, or, who Apollos, but Διδάκτορες, Ministers or Deacons, by whom ye believed*. And more expressly in his Epistle to the *Ephefians*, (c. 3. v. 7.) where he stiles himself Διδάκτωρ, a Minister or Deacon; of which Gospel, saith he, *I was made a Deacon or Minister*. And he useth the very same Expression in Coll. 1. 23, 25. whereof (i. e. of the Gospel) *I am made Διδάκτωρ, a Minister or Deacon*. And in his 1 Th^{ss}. 3. 2. he tells them, *he sent Timothy his Brother, and (Διδάκτωρ, Deacon, or) Minister of God, to establish and comfort them concerning the Faith*.

I will not say positively, that Timothy was actually a Bishop at this time, but it is most certain he was not barely a Deacon; because, the Apostle not only calls him Brother, but tells the *Thessalonians* that he sent him to *establish them in the Faith*; which Office could not well be executed under the Order of Presbyter at least: But when St. Paul wrote his Epistle to him, we are sure Timothy was an ordained or consecrated Bishop, and yet he stiles him only Διδάκτωρ, 1 Tim. 4. 6. *If thou put the Bre-*
thren

thven in Remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good Διάκονος, Deacon, or Minister of Jesus Christ. Nay, our Saviour himself, the very Original and Fountain of all Church Power, is called Minister in Hebr. 8. 2. now, of the things which we have spoken, this is the Sum, We have such a High-Priest, who is on the Right Hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens, a Minister of the Sanctuary. And in the 15th Chapter to the Romans, at the 8th Verse, the Apostle calls him barely Διάκονος, Minister or Deacon; Now, I say, that Jesus Christ was a Minister or Deacon.

And pursuant to this we find that what I have just now proved from Scripture is most clearly illustrated in the Form of our Church for ordering Deacons, set forth in 1559. the Epistle whereof beginneth thus, *Likewise must the (a) Ministers; that is, the Deacons, &c. which manifestly sheweth, that these two Words, Minister and Deacon, are, in the Original, of the very same Signification, as also in the Language of our Church pursuant thereunto; and when they are taken strictly, (as in Phil. 1. 1. 1 Tim. 3. 8. and in Acts 6. 5. &c.) do always denote Persons of the lowest Order, altho', in the Places above-cited, they plainly imply the first, or highest Order only.*

So that from what hath been briefly said on this first Particular, we may safely infer, that altho' the Apostles, or Apostolical Men the Bishops, were sometimes stiled Deacons (b), or Ministers (and so indeed was our blessed Saviour himself) as if they had been of this lowest Order only; yet we are very sure, and you shall find it clearly proved by-and-by, that each of them was invested with the first or highest Order and Authority in Christ's Church, at the very same time they were so stiled. I proceed now to my

II. Second Particular, which is to shew likewise from various Texts of Scripture, that the Apostles call'd themselves *Presbyters or Elders*; (the first signifying that in Greek which the other doth in English); or, Pastors and

(a) Vid. Sparrow's Collection of Articles, &c. p. 144, 150.

(b) Οι Ἐπίσκοποι. Διάκονοι, καὶ Πρεσβύτεροι ἐκκλησίᾳ Chrysost. Καὶ Διάκονος ὁ Ἐπίσκοπος ἐλέγξαι. Τιμοθέῳ Ἐπισκόπῳ ὄντι ἐλεγε τὴν Διακονίαν σὺ πληροφόρησον.

Chrys. in Ep. ad Philip. c. 1.

1 Tim. cap. 1. and cap. 3.

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and Priests (Priest being only a Contraction of Presbyter); and these all, strictly speaking, signify the 2d Order only, at the very same time they were Bishops ; or actually intrusted with the highest, or an Episcopal Power and Authority in Christ's Church. And to this Purpose the Evangelist, and most beloved Disciple, the Apostle *St. John*, who expressly calleth himself ὁ Πρεσβύτερος, Presbyter, or Elder, in the Beginning of both his 2d and 3d Epistles ; the former directed to the Elect Lady, and the latter to his dearly beloved *Gaius* ; the Presbyter or Elder, says he, *unto the elect Lady and her Children, whom I love in the Truth*, 2 Ep. v. 1. and the Presbyter or Elder *unto the beloved Gaius, whom I love in the Truth*, Ep. 3. v. 1. And to the same Purpose, or indeed, more fully, the Apostle *St. Peter*, *The Presbyters, or Elders*, says he, *which are among you, I exhort, who am also a Presbyter or Elder*, 1 Pet. 5. 1.

But now, altho' by way of Condescension to their inferior Brethren the Priests and Deacons, the Apostles were pleased to stile themselves in these Places Presbyters or Elders, as tho' they had been only of that Order, when they wrote their Epistles ; yet, if we consult other Parts of them, we shall find that they call'd themselves *Apostles* in the very same Epistles : So *St. Peter* in both his Epistles, Chap. 1. v. 1. *Peter an Apostle of Jesus Christ* : And *St. John*, in the Title of all his Epistles, is stiled an (a) *Apostle*.

And now, should any one deny that our Blessed Saviour's prime Ministers were of the highest Order in his Church, or what we now call Bishops, they seem manifestly to contradict not only the best human (as you shall hear hereafter) but likewise Divine, or Scripture Authorities ; and particularly, the holy Spirit himself, in *Eph. 4. v. 11, 12.* afore-cited, where he brings in our Blessed Saviour by the Mouth of the Apostle, naming them first, and as a distinct Order ; *He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, &c.* but especially in *1 Cor. 12. 28.* where it is written, *And God hath set some in the Church ; first, Apostles, secondarily Prophets, and thirdly Teachers ;* and, indeed, the very Words and Institution of our Blessed Saviour himself, who made choice only of Twelve Apostles.

Thus

(a) See the Original.

Thus St. Matthew, ch. 10. v. 1, 2. when he had called unto him his twelve Disciples, he gave them Power against all unclean Spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of Sickness, and all manner of Disease; and the Names of the twelve Apostles; &c. And Luke 6. v. 13. When it was day he called unto him his Disciples, and of them he chose Twelve, whom he also named Apostles: For that these Twelve Apostles were actually invested with the Office of High-Priests, or Bishops, by our Saviour himself, while he was among them, seems to me to be very evident from their Commission, which was given them by their Lord and Master several Years before they wrote their Epistles, and consequently before they were pleased to stile themselves in them by the Names of Priests or Elders, Ministers or Deacons.

Indeed, I must allow, that whilst our Saviour exercised his Ministerial Function here upon Earth, he himself represented the Bishop, or High Priest, among the Jews; his Apostles, the Priests; and the 70 Disciples, who were in Order and Dignity inferior to both, the Levites; but, upon his leaving the World, he solemnly inaugurated the Twelve to this high Office, and gave them full Commission to ordain others to it; and accordingly, they did consecrate or ordain, and transmit it to others to all succeeding Generations: For, immediately after his glorious Resurrection, or however, before his triumphant Ascension, they were actually dignified with the same Office, Power, and Authority that he himself was whilst he was among them, since he positively saith, *as my Father sent me*; that is, the same Commission, Power, or Office, that he gave me, and I have exercised among you, give I unto you*; even so send I you, John 20. 21.

and

* The like, or indeed, in more full Terms, doth a certain learned Divine testify, when he saith, speaking of our Blessed Saviour's Ministerial Powers, after he had triumph'd over Death by a glorious Resurrection, and was ready to ascend into Heaven to take Possession of his Kingdom there, that his Church might not suffer in his Absence for want of Pastors and Governors to take care of it, He committed all his Power and Authority, as Head of the Church, to his Apostles. This the Text expressly sheweth, *As my Father sent me*, saith Christ, *so send I you*. As, if he had said, *With the same Power and Authority that my Father sent me into the World to constitute and govern my Church, I send you and your Successors*. Dr. Tho. Br. Sermon on Remission of Sins, p. 16.

Dr. Sanderfon saith likewise, that the Constitution and Government of the Church of England by Bishops — is of Divine Right — exercised by the Apostles themselves, and by other *apostles*, in their Times, appointed, and enabled therunto by them, according to the Will of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by virtue of the Commission they had received from him. Bp. Lincoln's Episcopacy, as now establish'd, no Prejudice to Regal Power, p. 17.

Dr. Potter

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And lo! I am with you *always*, even unto the end of the World, Matt. 28. 20. And that our Saviour was Bishop, or High-Priest in his Church, I presume none will deny, since he was the *Head* of it, Coll. 1. 18. and *all Power* was, and is given unto him in Heaven and Earth, Matth. 28. 18. and especially since he is expressly called Bishop, and Apostle, and High-Priest, by St. Peter and St. Paul: Says the first, *Ye were as sheep going astray, but are now return'd unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your Souls*, 1 Ep. 2. 25. And the latter, *Wherefore, holy Brethren, Partakers of the heavenly Calling, consider the Apostle and High-Priest of our Profession, Jesus Christ*, Heb. 3. v. 1. but more especially, because it is written, that *Christ glorified not himself to be made a High-Priest, but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee*, Heb. 5. 5. And yet this Bishop, or Apostle, and High-Priest of ours, is stiled barely Priest, at the 4th verse of the 8th chap. of this very Epistle: For thus the same Apostle, *If he were on earth he should not be a Priest*; that is, according to the Old Law; for then he should constantly offer Gifts and Sacrifices, which, according to that Ministration, were never able to take away Sins; and yet he is a Priest for ever, but then it is according to the New Law, and after the Order of *Melchisedeck*; since by one Oblation of himself he hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified, Hebr. 10. 14.

Thus, I think, I have made it fully appear, under this second Particular also, that the Apostles were called Presbyters or Elders, Pastors or Priests, as well as Ministers or Deacons (yea, our Saviour himself was so call'd) at a Time when they must be Bishops, or invested with the same standing Power, Order, and Dignity, that our Lord himself was whilst he was among them. I proceed now in the

III. Third place, to examin the Texts, where the Words Overseers or Bishops seem to signify the first and
C second

Dr. Potter saith also, that in the same Manner, and with the same Authority as (Jesus Christ) his Father sent him; so he sent his Apostles. Vid. His most excellent Discourse on Church-Government. p. 23.

Dr. Hammond, in his Book, *De Confirmatione*, writes to the same Purpose, when he tells us, p. 49, 50. that *Radumina legum nos certos faciunt Omnem Ecclesiasticam Potestatem penes Episcopos (aut Apostolos) esse; — quæ, postmodum suis Modulis — Presbyteris imò Diaconis — concessa fuit.*

second Orders, promiscuously ; but, as I take it, plainly denote the second only, and yet the first or highest Order, as at present maintain'd in the Church of Christ, remains still distinct and clear against all those that are of a contrary Persuasion, as you will very readily observe from the Examination of the following controverted Passages in the New Testament. I begin

(1.) With *Acts* the 20th, in which Chapter the *πρεσβύτεροι*, Presbyters or Elders, at v. 17. are stiled 'Επίσκοποι, Bishops or Overseers, at v. 28. which, one would suppose, imply the highest Order only, and that this latter Text is the genuine Explication of the former : But now to understand these two Texts distinctly, or, what Order these Persons were strictly of that the Apostle sent for here in this Chapter so far as to *Miletus*, it will be requisite to acquaint you, that, as St. Paul generally planted any Church, particularly that of *Ephesus*, he left ordinary Priests and Deacons alone for some time to preach the Word, administer the Sacraments, and to perform all other Acts of Christian Worship that belong to these inferior Orders in a settled Church ; and, as he had Opportunity, and saw it convenient, visited them in his Travels from one Church to another, in his own Person ; and approv'd and confirm'd, or admonish'd and censur'd them, as Occasion required, himself.

These Acts of Jurisdiction were some part of his Care when he sent for these Bishops, Presbyters, or Overseers, from *Ephesus* to *Miletus* : For, although he had been with them several times before, and indeed, was but lately gone from them to visit his other Churches of *Greece* and *Macedonia* ; yet, knowing that he should speedily constitute another Diocesan or Bishop over them, and should see their Face no more, he was willing to leave his last visitatorial Legacy in as ample a manner as possible, that they might be almost infallibly directed how to govern themselves, and to take due Care of all the Flock committed to their Charge : But because urgent Business hasten'd him to a famous Anniversary at *Jerusalem*, so that he could not be at leisure to go so far up into the Country as *Ephesus*, he sent for all the Bishops, Presbyters, or Overseers he had ordain'd and govern'd in that See to meet, and attend him at *Miletus* : So the Text ; And from *Miletus* he sent to *Ephesus*, and called the Presbyters or Elders of the Church, v. 17. where, when they

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they were come, as their faithful Diocesan, or Bishop, he tells them, that having *been with them constantly for the space of three Years*, v. 31. he had not shunn'd to declare to them the whole Counsel of God, v. 27.

And then followeth this pressing Exhortation, v. 28. *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the Flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made You Overseers, (Επισκοποις) to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own Blood.*

Now from the Account I have given you of the Context of this Chapter, you cannot but observe, at least it is my humble Opinion, that these Elders, Overseers, or Bishops, were Ministers of an Order inferior to that of the Apostles; i. e. they were Presbyters or Elders of that Church only, under St. Paul, of which he was (a) Governor under Christ, or their proper Bishop, at that Time; otherwise, one would think, he cou'd not have obliged them to have attended his Visitation so far as to *Miletus*, as, you see, the Text expressly assures us He did; neither can I believe, that they wou'd have been obedient to so tedious a Command.

And that this Comment which I have here made upon these two Texts is literally true, and perfectly agreeable to the establish'd Liturgy of the Church of *England*, she makes it evidently appear by appointing this very Portion of Scripture for the Epistle in the *Form* for constituting and ordaining this very Order of Men (b).

Whether St. Paul appointed Timothy his Successor in this See, at this Time, I will not positively say; but if not now, doubtless it was in a very short Time after; because, he tells them, that *after his Departure there would arise grievous Wolves among them*, v. 29. and therefore, out of that tender Regard he had for them, he must needs send him speedily to keep them, as much as possible, steadfast in the Faith.

And, indeed, no fitter Person could be pitch'd upon for so extraordinary an Employ than Timothy, who was mighty in the Scriptures from his Youth, and a zealous Contender for the Faith against all Opposers whatsoever.

(a) *Vid.* Dr. Potter's Discourse of Church-Government, p. 74.

(b) Office for making Priests.

But now from what you have heard from the Examination of these Words, there can be no Reason to ground the Presbyterian Hypothesis upon them, viz. that there are but two Orders in the Church, Priests and Deacons only; or, that a bare Presbyter is of equal Power, Order, and Dignity, with those we now call Bishops; because it plainly appears, from the whole Context, that St. Paul was their Visitor, and superior to them, both in Order and Jurisdiction, at that Time. The like will appear,

(2.) If we consider *Philip. i. i.* where the same Apostle, writing to that Church, directs his Epistle, together with the Saints there, to the *Bishops* and Deacons. Thus the Text, Paul and Timotheus, the Servants of Jesus Christ to all the Saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons: Where you observe, that the Word *Bishops* beareth the same Name with those we now call Bishops; But as it is highly improbable there should be more than one Bishop of that See, or indeed, in any other settled Church or City, at one Time, unless perhaps, in Cases of Necessity, or to secure the Succession; So, we may very reasonably suppose, that these Bishops were no other then bare Presbyters; For, I do not find that the Apostle had yet made any one their settled Bishop, altho', we may presume, *Epaphroditus* went away from Rome invested with such a Character, or was made their Bishop not long after by Saint Paul; or as a very * learned Author observes, by the Apostles.

And indeed being so very able and acceptable an Elder to them, insomuch that the *Philippians* sent him upon a weighty Embassy to the Apostle, as far as Rome, He could do no less, out of Gratitude to them, and a reciprocal Respect, than get him constituted, or ordain and constitute him their Bishop himself. And truly, some of the *Fathers* are positive, that *Epaphroditus* was made Bishop of *Philippi* †; And, if at that Time, it can hardly be supposed that the Bishops here mentioned, then residing at *Philippi*, could be more than common Presbyters.

But,

* Mr. Nelson on Test. &c.

† Theod. T. 3. p. 323.

Phil. Pacianus Ep. 1. &c.

Hier. in Ep. ad Gal. c. 1.

Hil. in Epist. ad

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But, if this could not be clearly prov'd, I see no Reason why common Presbyters may not as properly be called Bishops in some Passages of holy Scripture, as we have manifestly prov'd, Apostles were called Deacons in others.

We cannot then, with any Colour of Reason, found the Presbyterian Hypothesis upon this Text exclusive of the highest Order, not only, because we may presume, Saint *Paul* was yet their proper Diocesan, or Bishop; but because, there is no ground from the Text to suppose that the highest Order is hereby excluded.

But, on the other hand, why may we not, with some learned Divines of our own, have as much Reason to believe that those Ministers of the Church at *Philippi* were real Bishops, as our Dissenters have to exclude that Order by the Authority of this Text? For, may not Bishops here signify the First Order, according to the Letter of the Text, as well as the Second? Presbyters did not always attend their Bishops, and the Words are not absolute either way, exclusive of the other.

But now, since they may, and do, by their own Acknowledgment, signify the Second and Third, why may they not as properly signify the First and Third, without denying the Institution of the Second? Besides, as Saint *Paul* was the great Apostle of the Gentiles, and had the Care of all the Churches in those Regions at that Time; why might he not intend, as well as mention, Bishops, or Overseers of the highest Order here; because, possibly, *Epaphroditus*, with his other Message, might carry Letters along with him, importing, that certain itinerant Bishops were then at *Philippi*, impatiently waiting for an Answer to them for the Regulation of some weighty and important Affairs in the several Churches, of which the Apostle had made them Bishops some where, or other, in that Part of the Continent; or, upon some other urgent, and necessary Occasion, which they would be glad to hear from the Apostle about, by this Messenger, while they sojourned there.

But however this be, which I will not lay much stress upon, (altho' several very learned Men have), it is highly probable, nay, some of the Fathers are very positive, that there were now, and then, in some Churches, just founded,

founded, Bishops, and Deacons only: (a) For, while the Bishop resided on the Place, or, planted the Gospel in some adjoining District, there was no absolute Necessity for the constant Attendance of the Ordinary, or, settled Presbyter. He might, perhaps, for some Time, be sent to officiate in a Cure founded and confirmed elsewhere, while the Bishop was preaching and confirming in his, or, making Profelytes some where thereabout: or, rather, there might be no Presbyters in some Places, because the Believers were not only few; but, out of these few, none were fit to be made settled Presbyters of to administer regularly the Word and Sacraments: (b) But, it was rarely known that ever the Bishop was without his Deacons, because, in those early Times, in the Infancy of the Church, the Peoples Charity was so very large, and constant Attendance upon the Bishop so very necessary, that a Deacon, whose Office it was chiefly to attend him, and to take care of the Poor, must necessarily be in waiting: (c)

But consider the Words which way you please, they will make nothing for our Dissenting Brethren, who endeavour to found their unwarrantable Hypothesis upon the Ruines of them. No more will

The 1 Tim. ch. 3. v. 1, 2. another Portion of Scripture, pick'd out for the same Purpose. The Words are these: *This is a true Saying; If a man desire the Office of a Bishop he desireth a good Work: A Bishop then, &c.*

Now, I must confess that our Church seems to confine this Text, in one of her Offices, to the highest Order, that of Bishops, because she makes Use of it for Part of her Service at the Consecration of a Bishop. But, with humble Submission to better Judgments, we may reasonably

(a) Proved from Epiphanius, Lib. 3. c. 1. where he saith, Νῆς ἐστὶ τὸ καὶ ἀρχιεπίσκοπος; that is, when the Apostles began to preach, — &c.

(b) Πλάτος δὲ μὴ ὅλῃς, ἵνα ἐνέσθῃσι ἐν αὐτοῖς Πρεσβύτεροι καὶ ἀρχιεπίσκοποι, καὶ ἐκείτῃσι ὅτι τῷ ἁγίῳ τόπῳ μόνον Ἐπισκοπία Epiph. Lib. 3. c. 1. Ed. Petav. p. 908.

The same doth a learned Man positively assert of those Persons he calls Bishops; for, says he, *It is true, there were none in some lesser Cities, but there were also none in some greater; the Reason was, not the smallness of the Place— but the want of Christians.* Prim. Episc. p. 57.

(c) To this Purpose writes Epiphanius, Lib. 3. c. 1. aforementioned, where he saith, *It was impossible for a Bishop to be without his Deacons, and therefore the Apostles took care that the Bishop shou'd have his Deacons to minister to him.*

Ἄνευ δὲ Διακόνων Ἐπισκοπὸν ἀδύνατον εἶναι, &c. See also Dr. Hammond on Act. 11. v. 30. Note b.

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ably presume, that She never intended that it should be strictly taken for that Order of Men exclusive of the other; because, in the next Chapter but one thence following, we have the Duty and Office of a common Presbyter, as I take it, plainly described; And, by the whole Tenour of the Apostle's Discourse, in this Epistle, it seems manifest to me, that the Bishop, here mentioned in ch. 3. (v. 1, 2.) must necessarily represent, or, include the Presbyter, or, Elder; cited in ch. 5. (v. 1.) viz. *Rebuke not a Presbyter, or, Elder*; And those Elders, or, Presbyters also at v. 17. of this latter Chapter, where it is written, *Let the Presbyters, or, Elders, that rule well, be counted worthy of double Honour*: For, the Bishop, mention'd in the former Chapter, must either comprehend, or, include the Elder, or Elders, mentioned in this latter, or the Apostle seems to prefer an Elder, or Elders before him; for, whereas, in the third Chapter, he sets down Duties as peculiar only, or chiefly, to an ordinary Presbyter, he here, in this fifth Chapter, talks of Jurisdiction in the Church; *Let the Presbyters, or, Elders, says he, that rule well*.

So that I would infer, from these two Passages, that the Bishop and Elders, here mentioned, signify the second Order, that of Priests chiefly, tho' not exclusive of the first. Indeed, the former of these Texts may, possibly, signify the first Order, as the Name seems to import, exclusive, strictly speaking, of the second, as I find, some of the Ancients verily believed, and several of our own Divines have positively asserted; but if so, there are few or no Directions left for the Conduct of the Second; and the Directions, or, Powers given to the Bishop, and Elders, in these two Passages, are so very like one another, and so perfectly agreeable to the pastoral Care, that one would believe, the Apostle here intended the second Order chiefly, as I said; or, at least, did not exclude it: For,

Secondly, I suppose, this first Passage, however, may be taken to include both Orders, as, our established Church did once fully give us to understand, by making use of it in the Form for making Priests, (d) as well as Bishops. (e) Which, after all, I am apt to think, will
prove

(d) Sparrow's Collection, &c. p. 150.

(e) It. p. 159.

prove the truest Comment on this Text, as seems to be sufficiently intimated both by several celebrated Fathers and Authors, in the Margin of this, (f) and the following Page; and by some of our own most learned Divines, also in their Discourses upon this Subject.

But let it be interpreted either, or any, of these Ways, it will make nothing for our dissenting Teachers; because, if it be understood as relating only to the highest Order, then they own three in the Church; And, if they pretend to exclude the highest, and take it to be referred only to the second, we are sure the second, as such, never had any Power, or Authority, to constitute any Order at all: Besides, this wou'd contradict the exprefs Words of another Part of this very Epistle, which appropriates the Power of Ordination to the highest Order only, *Lay hands* (meaning the Bishop of that Church, Sr. Timothy) *suddenly on no man*, 1 Tim. 5. 22.

(4) Another Portion of Scripture, which they bring against us to maintain their Hypothesis by, is the Words of my Text; *For this Cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in Order the things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, as I had appointed thee*: Which Word *Elders*, in this fifth, at the seventh verse next following, seems to be explained by the Word *Bishop*; From whence our Dissenting Brethren would gladly infer, that Bishop, or Bishops, and Elders, in these two Places, must certainly signify one and the same Order, and, consequently, that there are but two in Christ's Church; (i. e.) Presbyters, or Elders, and Deacons only.

But now, suppose we should grant that Presbyters, or Elders, and Bishops, in this Chapter, imply no more than the second Order, which, I am apt to think, they will find it a very hard Task positively to prove; yet this will not invalidate the first, or highest, seeing that here is a Person settled in this See of Crete already, superior to these two both in (g) Order and Dignity: For, what

(f) Vid. Chrysostom. Oecumen. Hilar. Diacon. &c.

(g) Timothy and Titus are not only universally allow'd to be of the 1st Order, but are frequently stiled Bishops by the ancient Fathers; and some of the most Learned of them, as well as of our own Divines, seem to suggest, that where the Word *Bishop* is found in Scripture, there generally is included the first as well as second Order in Christ's Church, (i. e.) Bishops and Presbyters or Priests.

Chrys. Homil. II. in 1 Tim.
1 Tim. 3.

St. Jerom, and several others.

Ambros. in 1 Cor. 12. 10.

Theodor.

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what says the Text? *For this Cause left I Thee in Crete that Thou shouldest—ordain Presbyters, or Elders in every City, as I had appointed Thee.* So that a single Person, of a distinct Order, and superior to that of Presbyters, or Elders, was their proper Bishop at that Time: For, as no Body, that I know of, denieth St. Paul's being of the highest, or, an Episcopal Order himself; so it is as plain from these Words, that he appointed Titus to ordain Elders throughout his Diocess of Crete; (i) And therefore, altho' we grant that the Bishop and Elders, in this Chapter, are the same with those mentioned in 1 Tim. Chap. 3. and 5. and that they have Respect to the second Order chiefly, if not only (as some Learned Men have thought fit to assert in both these Passages of these Epistles); yet, we have undoubted Authority from both of them for the Establishment of the supreme, or highest Order, that of Bishops.

So that the Arguments, which our Dissenting Brethren draw from these, and other Texts of holy Scripture, I have been hitherto examining, in Maintenance of their late Usurpations for founding Churches by ordinary Presbyters only, fall to the Ground. I proceed now, in the

IV. Fourth, and last Place, to produce the Texts where the Word, *Apostle*, or *Bishop*; *Apostleship*, or *Bishoprick*, mentioned likewise in the New Testament, signify the Episcopal, or highest Order, or Office, exclusive of the rest as such, and so conclude this first General.

But before I go about to clear this Point, it will be requisite to acquaint You, that in the Days of the Apostles, or, what we call the Apostolic Age, Bishops, and Apostles, were sometimes used for one, and were really the very same *supreme* Order, altho' the Word *Apostle*, while the Twelve liv'd, was mostly used out of Respect to the Twelve, who were, in a more peculiar Manner, stiled Apostles; as being not only immediately sent, and called by our Lord himself to the highest Office and Dignity in his Church, but stiled expressly Apostles by him in several Places of the New Testament, as afore observed. But then, in Process of Time, or, as they left the World, and had ordain'd Others to succeed them in

D

their

(i) Dr. Fran. Gastrell's Christian Institutes, p. 128.

their Office, their *Successors* declined the Name of Apostles, and contented themselves with the Title of Bishops; (k) And, before St. John's Death, the Fathers (l) tell you; that the Word *Bishop*, was appropriated to the Apostolical, or highest Order, in the Church only, as that of Apostle was to the Twelve generally in their Time. And for this Reason, perhaps, St. Peter was not ashamed to stile our Lord himself, *Bishop*. *Ye were as Sheep going astray, but are now return'd unto the Shepherd, and Bishop of your Souls.* But to proceed.

That we may prove this Matter beyond all reasonable Doubt, let us compare *Acts* 1. v. 20. with Verse 25. next following, and we shall find, that Bishop and Apostle were, by their Office, even from the beginning of Christianity, or the Apostolick Age, strictly the same; For Judas, who was one of the Twelve, being by Transgression fallen, that he might go to his Place, and the Apostles being obliged, according to Prophecy, to pitch upon another to take his Office, and manfully to witness our Saviour's Resurrection, accordingly decreed, in a full College, that one, chosen out from among the Seventy, should be taken into his Place, or Office. So the Text; and his Bishoprick let another take, v. 20.

And that this is the very same with Apostleship, at the end of this Chapter, is undeniably evident, since, after the College had made their Choice, *the Lot fell upon Matthias, and he took part of the Apostleship*, saith the Text; and was numbred with the eleven Apostles, v. 25, 26. (m)

So that, in the Infancy of the Apostolick Age, or before the three Orders were strictly confin'd to Bishops, and Presbyters, or Priests and Deacons; the Word Bishop and Apostle, or Bishoprick and Apostleship, were sometimes used to signify, and really were, one and the very same Order or Office: And, that it must be the highest, it cannot be deny'd, since, as it is certain

(k) Τὸ χεῖρς περιούσιον τὸ μὲν τῆς Ἀποστολῆς ὄνομα τοῖς ἀληθεῖς Ἀποστόλοις κατέλιπον, τὴν δὲ τῆς Ἐπισκοπῆς προσηγορίαν τοῖς παλαιοῖς καλεσμένοις Ἀποστόλοις ἐπέδωκαν. Theodoret. 1. 1. 3. 1. 3. Tom. p. 473.

(l) Vid. Euseb. E. H. lib. 4. cap. 22, 23. It. lib. 5. cap. 24.

(m) Hieronymus St. Hilary calls the Apostles themselves Bishops, in Epist. ad Ephes. cap. 4 v. 11. *Apostoli Episcopi sunt*, saith he. And St. Cyprian likewise looks upon them to be of one and the same Order. when he says, Ep. 3. p. 6. *Meminisse debemus quod Apostolos, id est, Episcopos Dominus elegit.* As also Anselm, when he says that *Jacobus Jerusalem erat Episcopus.* Explan. Epist. Paul. fol. 128.

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tain that St. Matthias was numbred with the Eleven, (and they were actually, as I said before, as soon as our Saviour was risen from the Dead, or before his Ascension, invested with the full Power and Authority of Bishops, or the very same Order that he himself was); so likewise, doubtless, had he the very same *Commission* (1) given to him that they had; and we need not question but the Lots were likewise ordered, or directed by the Lord, altho' they were cast by their Hands; (v. 26.) and Ch. 2. v. 14. But further:

That Bishops, or Apostles, signified the same supreme Order superiour to and distinct from that of Presbyters, or Elders, ev'n in the very Beginning of the Apostolick Age, we find sufficiently intimated, in the fifteenth Chapter of *Acts*, at a General Council held at *Jerusalem*; for certain Disciples, differing in their Judgments, from Paul and Barnabas, about Circumcision, as they were teaching at *Antioch*; they resolved to send them to the College of Apostles and Elders at *Jerusalem*, to be satisfied in their Doubts, in a full Assembly, about this Matter: So the Text, v. 2; *When Paul and Barnabas had no small Dissension and Disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them should go up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and Elders, about this Question.* Where, you see, the Apostles are plac'd first, and as they really were, in Order, distinct from, and superior to, the Presbyters, or Elders, (2) or, otherwise the holy Spirit here must be guilty of Tautology, which no Body, surely, shou'd presume to say, lest he grieve him, and blaspheme; And yet some have ventur'd to say, that these Presbyters, or Elders, were Bishops, altho' not of *Jerusalem*, yet in the Country of *Judea*.
D 2But

(1) To this the Learned Mr. Nelson doth sufficiently bear witness, when he saith, that our Saviour, after his Resurrection, gave his Apostles (among whom St. Matthias is very worthily number'd) this Commission to be the Supreme Governors of his visible Church; and they being invested with this Power, ordain Deacons with Prayer and Imposition of Hands. *The first Ordination of Presbyters we read of, was perform'd by two Apostles, Paul and Barnabas, both clothed with Episcopal Authority in an eminent Degree.* Vid. *Heath's* Eccl. p. 537.

(2) There were no Lay-Elders, that I can find, till Constantine's Time; and what gave him Occasion to institute 'em then, and the fatal Consequences that succeeded immediately after the Institution of them, will be best made appear from the *History of Geneva* of those Times; or, in case that cannot be procured, from the most cruel and dreadful Account, the Author of the *Original of Kings Government* gives of them at their very entering upon their Office. From Page 97, &c. See *Acts* 16. 4. 21. 18.

But further yet, in the succeeding Part of this Chapter we find, that the Apostles, or Bishops, are not only manifestly superiour to the Presbyters, or Elders, here mentioned; but, one of them, viz. *James* the Brother of our Lord, was the settled Apostle, or Bishop of *Jerusalem* at that Time. This we learn from the Jurisdiction he exercis'd there at the 19th Verse; For, having summ'd up the several Evidences, about the Matters in Debate, he gave, as being their Bishop, and Chairman, or President, a final Determination of them, himself; *Wherefore, says he, my Sentence is, &c.* (p)

So that from what hath been said upon this first general Head, it seems to appear from undeniable Texts of Scripture, (and other undoubted Authorities) that there was a supreme Hierarchy in the Apostolick Age; and, ev'n before, or upon our Saviour's leaving the World, distinct from, and superior to that of Presbyters, or Elders, or Priests and Deacons, notwithstanding what hath been objected to the contrary. I shall therefore answer only one Objection more, which our dissenting Brethren never fail to make against this Order; and then proceed to my second General. The Text is this, *1 Tim. 4. 14. Neglect not the Gift which is in Thee, which was given Thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery.*

And truly, this is the most plausible Authority they produce in Defence of their Cause (suppose we admit it to signify the Business of Ordination, as all Parties, so far as I can find, generally do); And yet, notwithstanding this, if we look into the real Merits of it, and examine it thoroughly, we shall find that it will not make so much for them as they confidently expect from it.

The great Difficulty lieth in the Meaning of the Word *Presbytery*; they would have it to signify the second Order only, and so disown the Order of Bishops. But, how can they make it appear that it was an Assembly of
ordinary

(p) Therefore, *ὡς ἱερεὺς ἐν τῷ κέντρῳ*, says *Theophylact* of him in *Act. Apost.* p. 135. that is, as he was their Bishop, and had the chief Seat in that See, saith *St. Chrys. Tom.* p. 796. 796. for, *ἐπίσκοπος ὡς τῷ ἐν Ἱερουσολέμοις Ἐκκλησίᾳ*, adds he; and, *ἐκ τῶν ὡς τῷ ἀρχιεπισκοπικῶν*.

Eusebius also, from *St. Clement*, saith expressly, that *St. James* was constituted Bishop of *Jerusalem* immediately after our Saviour's Ascension. His Words are these, *As Clement reports the Matter, He (St. James) was ordain'd Bishop of Jerusalem presently after our Saviour's Ascension.* *Statim post Ascensionem*, saith *St. Jerom.*

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ordinary Presbyters alone that is here meant? The Text declares no such Matter; and several of the ancient Fathers, (who, one wou'd think, shou'd comment on these Words a great deal better than we at so great a Distance from them) declare quite the contrary.

But admit that several common Presbyters were present at *Timothy's* Ordination; and, that *St. Paul*, by Way of Condescension to his inferiour Brethren, was not very curious how he express'd himself in this Place, viz. as to strict Propriety of Speech, or a nice Distinction between the Episcopate and Presbyterate, or between the Office of Bishops and Presbyters, or those commonly called Elders; yet so long as it is not here said, that *Timothy* was ordained by them, all that can be concluded from the Text, is, that he seems to us, in these darker Ages, to have left the Matter somewhat mysterious (altho' I do not find that he ever was so when it was requisite for him to be otherwise); or, that he hath not accurately enough expressed himself in this Place, so as that we may distinctly and perfectly understand what he meaneth.

But now since *Timothy* was always allow'd to be a real Bishop, or superior to other common Presbyters, as the most learned of our dissenting Brethren cannot deny, it will be a very difficult thing for them to prove, upon their own Hypothesis, that he had that superior Commission which they do not pretend to give, and yet disown his executing his Office pursuant to his Commission: For, if they allow him to be a real Bishop, they must contradict themselves in denying this Order the Apostle invested him with, and which, without all Question, he regularly executed throughout his Diocess of *Crete*, as a perpetual, or standing Ordinance to all succeeding Generations; at least, for any thing we can find to the contrary, in any of the ancient Ecclesiastical Records: But, if they strive to unbishop him now, after he has so long adorn'd the Episcopal Chair, they do not only flatly deny what was universally granted by all Parties in the first and purest Ages; but also, the Authority and Commission of the great Apostle, *St. Paul* himself.

So that take the Argument which way they will, they seem to be very much mistaken; and therefore must either fairly own their Mistake, or flatly deny sacred Scripture, and the best Authorities of the Christian Church.

But,

But, may they add, *Timothy* was an extraordinary Minister, and consequently, cannot be looked upon as a standing Precedent in the present Case. But, what then? Will that mend the Matter? If they were only ordinary, or inferior Presbyters and Ministers that gave him his Commission, could they make him any more? could they give him a larger Power, or more abundant Gifts than they themselves had? 'Tis certain they cou'd not.

So that if none of them were of an Order superior to that of bare Presbyters, he must pretend to no more himself, or, indeed rather, he cou'd be intrusted with none of the three Orders at all, because the Power of Ordination was never committed to the Hands of these Men.

But now, we may positively assert, that *Timothy* was of the highest Order, and a standing Precedent for it too, so far as we can learn, whether we consider the uninterrupted Practice and Authorities (7) of the Primitive Church, or the infallible Records of sacred Scripture, loudly witnessing it; since the Text plainly tells us, that *Timothy* was to receive *Accusations against Men of the second Order*, 1 Tim. 5. 19; and, at the next Verse following, to rebuke, as well as exhort, Verse 20. This therefore undeniably proves that he exercised that Jurisdiction which is peculiar to the highest Order: and, if we consult the Words of his Commission, it is manifest he was of the supreme Order; seeing that it was not an Assembly of ordinary Presbyters alone that ordained him; but if the Majority was so that attended (which we have no Occasion to grant); yet they had their Bishop that presided over them, and ordained him: *Wherefore, saith the Apostle, I put Thee in Remembrance, that Thou stir up the Gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my Hands*, 2 Tim. 1. 6. And more expressly in the Words of his Commission; *Lay Hands*, that is, *Lay Thou Hands suddenly on no Man*, 1 Tim. 5. 22.

But, it will be plainer still, if we compare 1 Tim. 4. 14. afore with the 2 Tim. 1. 6. just now-cited, where we find that the Præposition, *Διὰ*, which is referred, in this latter Text, to the Apostle, signifieth the efficient Cause,
or

(7) Vid. *Ambros.* 1 Tim. 3. 8. *Epiph.* Hæres. 75. n. 5. *Chrysost.*
Tim. 4. 1. 5. *Theoph.* in 1 Tim. 4. 14. *Ensel.* H. E. L. 3. cap. 4.
 3. *Cecumen.* in 1 Tim. 1. 3.

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or the Person that ordained him ; and the *μετὰ*, which relates to the Presbytery, the assistant Powers only, or certain proper Evidences of *Timothy's* Ordination, and no more.

Thus I have examined, as briefly as I could, all the Places that I find in the new Testament that seem to favour the Presbyterian Cause, or, that seem to confound the three distinct Orders of Apostles or Bishops ; Presbyters or Priests ; Ministers or Deacons ; and, I hope, have made it plainly appear from all of them, that Episcopacy, or a distinct Order of Men, superior to both, remains still distinct and clear.

The same will appear if we consider, in the

II. Second Place, some of the most undoubted Testimonies of the earliest Fathers of the Primitive Church, who must certainly be the most infallible Judges, and undeniable Evidences of Matters of Fact of this Nature that possibly can be.

(1.) I begin with those of the first Century first, as soon as I have mentioned a Passage taken out of one of those Canons, commonly called the Apostolical Canons ; where it is written (1), " Let a Bishop be consecrated " by two or three Bishops, (but) a Presbyter, or " Priest, ordained by one.

In which Place, you see, a Bishop is manifestly distinct from, and superior to, a common Presbyter, not only in Order ; but also, in point of Ordination, exclusive of the Presbyter as such. And now I proceed to the Fathers. And,

First, Of *Clement Romanus*, who was cotemporary with the Apostles, Fellow-labourer with *St. Paul*, and Successor to *St. Peter* in the Bishoprick of *Rome* (2). He speaks in this wise. (1) " The Apostles, says he, preaching in Countries and Cities, ordain'd the first Fruits " of

(1) Ἐπιτομή ὑπὸ Ἐπισκόπων χειροτονῶντο δὲ ἡ τετάρτη, Πρεσβύτερος ὑπὸ ἐνὸς Ἐπισκόπου. *Nov. Test. Lib. 3. cap. 3. p. 232.*

(2) *Nov. Test. Lib. 3. cap. 3. p. 232.* Euseb. H. E. Lib. 3. c. 3. *Epiph. Hæres. 2. c. 6.* Tertul. de Prescript. Hæret. c. 32. p. 213. And Patrick Trenchard's Edition before this of *St. Clement's*.

(1) Καὶ ἡ χάρις ἐν ἡ πόλει κυριεύουσι καὶ δίδωσιν τὰς Ἀπαρχὰς αὐτῶν. δοκιμάζοντες πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἡ Ἐπιτομή ἢ διακονοῦντες μελλόντων πιστεῖν, ἢ τῶν ὁ καὶ αὐτῶν. ἐν γὰρ ἡ πολλῶν χάρις ἐστὶν ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἐπισκόπου ἢ Διακόνου, — καὶ λαμβάνου τὰς Ἐπισκόπους αὐτῶν ἐν Δικαιοσύνη, ἢ τὰς Διακόνους αὐτῶν ἐν πίστει. 1 Ep. ad Corinth. n. 42. or, p. 54, 55. Floruit A. D. 70.

“ of them (after they had proved them by the Spirit),
 “ *Bishops* and *Deacons* of such as should believe : Neither
 “ was this any new thing ; for it was said of *Bishops* and
 “ *Deacons* a long while ago ;—I will constitute their
 “ *Bishops* in Righteousness, and their *Deacons* in Faith :
 Which last Clause *St. Clement* takes out of the Prophet
Isaiah, (cap. 60. v. 17.) and interprets it here of two of
 the Officers of the Christian Church, viz. *Bishops* and
Deacons, by way of Allusion ; we may presume, to two
 of those spiritual Officers of the Jewish Church, at least.

But truly, altho' he do but mention only two Orders
 here, (i. e.) I suppose, the first and third ; yet his
 Words are not to be understood so, as if they excluded
 the second ; as you'll very readily observe at the first
 reading them ; as also, from the 40th Page foregoing ;
 where the Word *Isseis*, by the most judicious of the an-
 cient, as well as present, Church, is declared to contain
 in it both the first and second Order, viz. that of high
 Priests and Priests ; or *Bishops* and *Presbyters* : And
 besides, you are to remember, that it often happen'd,
 as the Apostles, or *Bishops*, went up and down to con-
 vert Infidels, and to preach to Cities and Country Vil-
 lages, that there were none worthy to be ordained set-
 tled *Presbyters* in those Places ; and so Apostles, or
Bishops and *Deacons*, laboured, for some time, among
 them, only the *Deacons* attended their *Bishop* ; and the
Bishop, after he had instructed them in the several Parts
 of their Duty, ordained some of them, or other later
 Converts, *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*, as he found them
 best qualified, and the Place worthy of their Reception.

Indeed, I know, that some of the ancient (u) as well
 as modern Divines have asserted, that the Words, *Bishops*
 and *Deacons*, in this Passage of *St. Clement*, denote the se-
 cond and third Orders, that of *Presbyters* and *Deacons*
 only, exclusive of the first as such ; because, say they,
 he wrote in the Scripture Language, which doth (mostly, if not)
 always confine the former of these Words to the second Order :
 But, suppose we allow what they assert to be true, and
 that he did write in that Language ; yet the Word, *A-*
postles, at the Beginning of this Passage, and in the Pa-
 ragraph immediately before it, (vid. *Loc.*) must sure-
 ly

(u) Vid. *Herman, Coming. Epist. before St. Clement*, and several others.

Institution and Jurisdiction of BISHOPS. 25

ly signify the first: and therefore, whether my Interpretation of it be true or false; yet, the supreme Hierarchy is here inviolably maintained: However, others of our most learned Commentators and Divines, and indeed, *Epiphanius* himself, seems very clearly to bear me out in what I here submit to the impartial Reader, when he says, "The Apostles could not order all things at once. It is true; there was Occasion for Presbyters, as well as Deacons, to administer in holy things; but, as where the Place was not worthy, there was no Bishop; so it often happen'd, thro' the Paucity of Believers, that a Bishop and his Deacons were constituted only. And this Account saith he, (L. 3. c. 1.) is taken *βασυ- γάταις Ἰσραὴλ*, from the ancientest Histories of the Church; (x) meaning, no doubt, this Passage of St. *Clement* among the rest.

From which you may farther observe, that it was not Design, but absolute Necessity, that caus'd a Church, ev'n at that Time, to be incompleat; for if their Converts had been numerous, and there had been fit Persons to establish a compleat Hierarchy, we may be sure, they wou'd have constituted a compleat Church, and would have left, generally, three distinct Orders where ever they came; at least, as they judg'd it most proper for the more speedy and effectual Propagation and Establishment of the Christian Faith. But to proceed.

This Father is more express in another Place. For, says he, "The (y) Apostles knew, by our Lord Jesus Christ, that there should Contention arise upon Account of Episcopacy, or the Episcopal Name, or Office; therefore, for this Reason, having a perfect Foreknowledge (of it), they appointed those (Persons) beforementioned; and, at the same Time, gave in Charge, that, if they should die, other choice, or duly qualify'd Men, should take their Office." Likewise, says he, in another Place, comparing the Jewish

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Hierarchy

(x) Οὐ γὰρ πάντα εὐθὺς ἐδιδόθησαν οἱ Ἀπόστολοι καθιεῖν τὰς. Περὶ ἐκείνου γὰρ ἡμεῖς χρειαί, καὶ διακόνων, διὰ τὰς, &c. *Epiphanius*. *Haer.* 75. § 5. *Floruit* *circiter* *Ann. Dom.* 376.

(y) Οἱ Ἀπόστολοι ἡμῶν ἔγνωσαν διὰ τὴν Κερίαν ἡμῶν ἡσυχίαν καὶ ἐπὶ τῇ ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὀνόματι τῆς Ἐπισκοπῆς, διὰ ταύτην ἐκείνην αἰτίαν, παρῶν ἐκείνων τῶν ἀποστόλων, κατετίθησαν τὰς προειρημένους. καὶ μετὰ τὸ ἀποβῆναι ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου ἐκείνων, ἵνα ἂν κοινωθῶσιν, διαδεχόμενοι ἐπὶ τοῖς καθήκουσιν ἀνδράσι. τῶν ἀποστόλων, &c. 1 *Ep. Cor.* N. 44. or C. 44. or S. 44. or p. 57.

Hierarchy to this under the Gospel; (y) " To the
 " High Priest, or Bishop, were his proper Offices gi-
 " ven; and a proper Place, or Order, was appointed
 " the Priests; And the Levites had their distinct Offices,
 " or Ministrations, (in the Original, Deaconships;
 " but) a Lay-man was bound to Lay-business.

And now, as nothing need be more full for the Epis-
 copate, or the supreme Order of Bishops, than these
 several Authorities of this Father; so, we are sure, He
 could not be mistaken in them, because, he was not on-
 ly ordained, and consecrated, by that Order of Men,
 himself, I mean, the Apostles; but conversed also a-
 mong them, and laboured very frequently with them:
 So that his Testimony, in the present Case, may be look-
 ed upon as entirely convincing, or infallible. Pass we
 now o,

(2) Another Apostolical Father, viz. *Ignatius*,
 Bishop of *Antioch*, who flourished in the same Age, but
 near thirty Years after *St. Clement*: However, it was
 whilst some of the Apostles were yet alive, being ordained,
 as several of the *Fathers* (2) testify, by *St. Peter* him-
 self.

Now this holy Man makes it fully appear, that those
 which we now call Bishops were of the highest Order,
 and that there were three distinct settled Orders in the
 Church, at that Time: And because of their great Import-
 tance, and Divine, or Apostolical Institution, he thinks
 it necessary to give a particular Account of them, and of
 our Duty to them, in his several Epistles to those
 Churches which he had lately founded. And

First, in that to the *Trallians*: Where he says, (a)
 " Be ye subject to your Bishop, as to the Lord (Jesus;)
 " —And

(y) Τῷ Ἀρχιερεὶ ἰδίαι λειτουργίαι διδόνται εἶσθαι καὶ τοῖς ἱεροῦσι ἰδίᾳ ὁ
 τῷ πρῶτῳ προστάττει καὶ λαϊκοῖς ἰδίαι διακονίας ὁρῶμεν. Ὁ λαὸς δὲ ἀνδρα-
 γῶν τοῖς λαϊκοῖς προστάγματα διδόναι. Cap. 40; or, Par. 40; or, p. 53.
 In the second Page of this 1st Epistle, he mentions, ἐκκλησίαι; and, in the
 30th, he calls them, πρεσβυτέραι; and after both these, he tells us, we are to
 honour the πρεσβύτεροι, which, by several very learned Men, are taken to
 imply the 1st and 2d Orders.

(2) Δὲ τὸ πρῶτον διζῶν. Chrysost. Hom. in Ignat. vol. I. p. 499. Eu-
 feb. H. E. Lib. 3. cap. 22.

(a) Τῷ Ἐπισκοπῷ ὑποτάσσεται ὡς τῷ Κυρίῳ — καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτέρῳ, ὡς
 Ἀποστόλῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ — Δεῖ δὲ καὶ τὰς Διακόνους ὄντας μυστήριον Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ
 καὶ πάντα τὰς ἐκκλησίας ἐκκλησίαν καὶ ἐκκλησίαν. Ignat.
 Epist. ad Trall. See Polycarp's and Ignatius's Epistles bound up to-
 gether, p. 127.

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“ —And to the Presbytery, as to the Apostles of Jesus
 “ Christ; — And the Deacons likewise, being set o-
 “ ver the Mysteries of Christ Jesus, ought to please in
 “ every thing. — Without these there is no regular
 “ Church; or Church of the Saints.

Secondly, in his Epistle to the *Philadelphians* : (*b*)
 “ As many as are of Christ they are with the Bishop;
 that is, in Communion with him. And, in another
 Place, (*c*) “ There is one Bishop, with the Presbytery,

“ and the Deacons. As also, in another, says he, (*d*)
 “ Give heed to the Bishop, and to the Presbytery, and
 “ to the Deacons: Without your Bishop do nothing.

Thirdly, in his Epistle to the *Magnesians*; where he tells
 you that (*e*) “ You ought not to condemn the Stature,
 “ or Youth, of your Bishop; but, according to the
 “ Commandment of God, the Father, to pay him all
 “ Reverence, or due Respect, as I am assured, (saith
 “ he) religious Elders do. Again

(*f*) “ As the Lord did nothing without the Father;
 “ so neither do ye, without the Bishop, and his Pres-
 “ byters. And again,

“ It is fitting that we should not only be called Chris-
 “ tians, but be so, and not as some, who call their Go-
 “ vernor Bishop, and yet (despise his Mission, or) do
 “ all things without him: But I can never think that
 “ such as these have a good Conscience, seeing that they
 “ are not gathered together according to the Command
 “ of God. (*g*)

Fourthly, in his Epistle to the Church of *Smyrna*, where
 he saith, (*b*) “ All of you be subject to your Bishop,
 “ as Jesus Christ is subject to his Father; And to the
 “ Presbytery,

E 2

(*b*) “Οσοι χειρὲς εἰσὶν, ἔτοι μὲν τῷ Ἐπισκόπῳ εἰσὶν. Epist. ad Philadelph. pag. 40.

(*c*) Εἷς Ἐπίσκοπος, ἀμὲν τῷ Πρεσβυτερίῳ, καὶ τοῖς Διακόνοις. Ibid.

(*d*) Τῷ Ἐπισκόπῳ προσέχετε, καὶ τῷ Πρεσβυτερίῳ, καὶ τοῖς Διακόνοις. — Χωρὶς Ἐπισκόπου μηδὲν ποιεῖτε. Ibid. p. 43.

(*e*) Καὶ ὑμῶν ὃ ἀρίστη μὴ κατασχευῖν τῆς ἡλικίας (other Copies have it o- therwise) τῷ Ἐπισκόπῳ, ἀλλὰ καὶ γνώμῳ Θεοῦ Πατρὸς πάντων ἐν ἡρώτων αὐτοῦ δουλεύειν καὶ ὡς ἔγνω καὶ τὰς ἀγνῆς Πρεσβυτέρους. Epist. ad Magnes.

(*f*) Ὅσοι ὦν ὁ Κύριος ἔποιεν, οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς τῷ Πατρὶ ἐδοῦν ἔποιον. — Ὅπως μηδὲ ὑ- μεῖς ἀνεῖ τῷ Ἐπισκόπῳ, καὶ τῷ Πρεσβυτερίῳ μηδὲν πράξετε. p. 23.

(*g*) Ad Magnes. p. 32.

(*h*) Πάντες τῷ Ἐπισκόπῳ ἀκολουθεῖτε. ὡς ὁ Χριστὸς ἠκολούθη τῷ Πατρὶ, καὶ τῷ Πρεσβυτερίῳ, ὡς καὶ ἡ Ἀποστολή τὰς καὶ Διακόνους ἐν ἡρώτων αὐτοῦ. Μηδὲ χωρὶς Ἐπισκόπου καὶ Πρεσβυτέρου ἢ ἀνεκλήσειν εἰς τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν. Epist. ad Smyrnas, p. 6.

“ Presbytery, as to the Apostles ; and reverence the
 “ Deacons, as the Ordinance of God. Let no one do a-
 “ ny thing, in any ecclesiastical Matters, without the
 “ Bishop. And, a little after, (i) “ I greet your most
 “ divine Bishop, and your Reverend Presbytery, and
 “ the Deacons, our Fellow Labourers.

Lastly, faith one, “ *Ignatius* derives the Original of
 “ Episcopacy from Christ himself, the universal Bishop,
 “ and compares the Bishop, with his Bench of Presby-
 “ ters, to Christ sitting in the midst of his Apostles,
 “ and is the most express and vehement of all the Anci-
 “ ents in setting forth the Dignity and Preeminence of
 “ the Bishop.

Thus I have produced such plain Testimonies of two
 of the most eminent Fathers of the first and purest Age
 of the Church, for the Divine, or Apostolical Institution
 of Bishops, as cannot reasonably be denied : And, what
 we find in these, we may be very well assured, was con-
 stantly taught and practised by all the rest.

But further ; To put this Matter, if possible, out of
 all Dispute, let us consider, in the

(2.) Second Place, the Century next following, and
 we shall find that the Fathers of this entirely agree, in
 the Case before us, with those of the former.

First, I begin with *Irenæus*, Bishop of Lyons, who flou-
 rished about the Year of our Lord 180. He, in his
 Book against the *Valentinian* Heresy, writeth thus ; (k)
 “ We are able, faith he, to reckon up those Bishops
 “ who were constituted by the Apostles in the several
 “ Churches, and their Successors, all the way down,
 “ to our own Time ; — To whom they committed those
 “ Churches, — delivering up to them their Place and
 “ Power.

And, in the next Chapter he is more positive, say-
 ing that (l) “ The Apostles actually left the Bishops
 “ their Successors, giving them their own Power and
 “ Authority. And again, faith he, (m) “ We have the
 “ Successions

(i) Ἀποτίθεται τὸν ἀρχιερεὺς ἐπίσκοπος, καὶ τὸν διακόνον ἡγουμένον, καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφούς τοὺς συνδουλούς. Ibid.

(k) Hæcenus annumerare qui ab Apostolis instituti sunt Episcopi in Ecclesiis, & Successores eorum, usque ad nos ; — Quibus etiam ipsas Ecclesias committebant, — Suum ipsorum Locum Magisterii tradentes. *Irenæus adversus Hæres. Valentin. Lib. 3. c. 3.*

(l) Lib. 3. c. 4.

(m) Lib. 4. c. 63.

Institution and Jurisdiction of BISHOPS. 29

“ Successions of the Bishops, to whom the Apostolical Church was, in every Place, committed.

So that, from what hath been briefly collected out of this ancient Father, we learn, that the Order of Bishops was of Apostolical Institution at least, and that they were invested in their respective Churches from the Apostles Days down to this Father's, with the same standing Power, Office, and Authority, that the Apostles themselves were.

Secondly, *Tertullian*, a celebrated Father of the same Age, but, about a dozen Years after, doth also clearly testify the same, in his Book *De Baptismo*; where he saith, that (o) “ The High Priest, which is the Bishop, hath the Right, or chief Power to give Baptism; And, after him, the Presbyters, and Deacons; but “ not without the Authority of the Bishop.

From which Passage you may readily observe, that there are not only the three distinct Orders fairly contained in it as in the Quotations before; but likewise, that all Church-Power and Authority is primarily lodg'd in the Bishop; insomuch, that, without his Commission, neither Presbyters, nor Deacons, are permitted so much as to Baptize: Which is a most evident Demonstration, not only of the Divine, or Apostolical Power of Bishops superior to, and exclusive of, the Presbyters and Deacons; but also of the utter Invalidity, or Nullity of all Protestant Dissenters Ministrations whatsoever, and particularly, of those that pretend to derive their Authority from no higher an Order than bare Presbyters; And as full, surely, must it needs be against all those that would justify their Administrations by Lay-hands alone; or by those that pretend to no outward, or regular Call at all.

So that you plainly see, from this venerable Father likewise, that the supreme Order of Bishops was manifestly settled and maintain'd, without any Opposition, that we can find, all his Days. And therefore without giving You any farther Trouble with more Authorities in this, we will proceed now to those in later Centuries.

(3.) And

(o) *Dandi Baptismum Jus habet summus Sacerdos, qui est Episcopus, debinc Presbyteri, & Diaconi, non tamen sine Episcopi autoritate. Tertull. de Bap. c. 17. p. 692.* See also his 32d Chap. *De Præscriptione Hæreticorum.*

(3.) And, *First*, of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who flourished in the Beginning of the third Century, and ingenuously acknowledgeth, that there were three distinct Orders also throughout the Churches in his Time, viz. (p) of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.

Secondly, (q) *Origen* and (r) *Cyprian*, who lived in the same Age, are likewise full to the same Purpose in several Places of their Writings; namely, that the Order of Bishops was founded upon the Apostolical, or Divine Law; (i. e.) upon Christ Jesus; and that they were superior to, and distinct from, Presbyters and Deacons. As also,

Thirdly, *Eusebius*, who liv'd at the latter End of this, and the Beginning of the next Century, and gives you a particular Catalogue of the several Successions of Bishops in four of the largest Christian Churches; viz. (s) *Jerusalem*, *Rome*, *Antioch*, and *Alexandria*.

(4.) *St. Ambrose* also, who flourished toward the Decline of the fourth Century, affirms the same, when he tells us, in his Comment on *Eph. 4. v. 11.* that, (t) "The Apostles, (mentioned in this Verse), were Bishops; the Prophets Expounders of the Scriptures, as *Agabus*; (And) the Evangelists, Deacons, as was *Philip* — For (adds he) all Orders are included in the Bishop; because he is the Chief-Priest; that is, the Prince of the Priests, and Prophet, and Evangelist, and to dispense all other Offices of the Church for the Benefit of the Faithful.

(5.) *First*, *Theodoret* likewise, who flourish'd in the Beginning of the Fifth Century, in his excellent Comment on *1 Tim. 3. 1.* Where, it is written, If any Man desire the Office of a Bishop he desires a good Work; very learnedly instructs us thus, saying, (viz.) that (u) "The

(p) Πρεσβυτεροι καὶ τὸν Ἐκκλησίαν, says he, Ἐπισκόπων, Πρεσβυτέρων Διακόνων. *Sicrom. Lib. 6.*

(q) Vid. *Origen* of Prayer, p. 103. Ed. Oxon. As also his Commentaries on *St. Matth.* p. 395. *Flor. A. D.* 230.

(r) Vid. *Cypr. Ep.* 3, 33, 45, 55, & 66. *Flor. A. D.* 250.

(s) *Euseb. Hist. Eccles.* Lib. 2. and Lib. 3. cap. 4.

(t) Apostoli Episcopi sunt; Prophetæ Explanatores Scripturarum, sicut *Agabus*. — Evangelistæ Diaconi sunt, sicut fuit *Philippus*: Nam in Episcopo omnes Ordines sunt, quia Princeps Sacerdos est, id est, Princeps est Sacerdotum, & Prophetæ, & Evangelistæ, & cætera ad implenda Officia Ecclesiæ in Ministerio Fidei. *Ambros. Com. on Eph. 4. 11.* See also his *Com. on 1 Tim. 3.* and his *Pref. in Ep. ad Tit.* Episcopus erat *Milan*; & floruit *A. D.* 370.

(u) Ἐπισκοπος ἐπιτελεῖ τὴν Πρεσβυτερίαν λέγει, μὴ δὲ τὸν Ἐπισκοποῦς ἑαυτοῦ, τοὺς πᾶσι προσηκούσας Διακόνους ἔχει, τοὺς Πρεσβυτέρους παρα-
λίσσας

Institution and Jurisdiction of BISHOPS. 31

“ The Apostle here calls the Presbyter Bishop ; because
 “ (says he) after the Rules prescrib'd concerning
 “ Bishops , he descendeth to those concerning Dea-
 “ cons, omitting Presbyters ; because, anciently, or in
 “ the first Age of the Church, the same Persons were
 “ stiled Presbyters and Bishops ; the Name, Apostles,
 “ being (generally) given to those who are now called
 “ Bishops. Which Learned Father gives us clearly to
 understand that there were not only three distinct Orders
 in Christ's Church in his Time, but long before, viz. in
 the Apostolic Age ; and that Presbyters then were ge-
 nerally called Bishops ; And, so long as they went un-
 der that Name, those we call Bishops now, were sti-
 led for the most part by the Name of Apostles.

And indeed this Authority, and Observation of his a-
 lone, viz. of the promiscuous Use of Bishops and Presby-
 ters in the Apostles Time, may serve very well for a
 good Solution to, and Interpretation of, several the like
 Phrases we meet with in holy Scripture, as before set
 down and explain'd, and yet the three Orders remain
 distinct and clear. But,

Secondly, And to conclude this Head. St. Austin, who
 liv'd in this Age, but somewhat later then Theodoret, is
 more vehement for the Divine Right of Episcopacy than
 any that liv'd before him, since he binds the Acknow-
 ledgment of it upon all his Successors, as a necessary
 Duty ; for, says he, (x) “ Every one ought to know,
 “ that our Saviour instituted Bishops in the Churches ;
 “ for, before he ascended into Heaven, laying his Hands
 “ upon the Apostles, He ordained them *Bishops*. And,
 in another Place, says he, (y) “ The Words of our
 “ Lord Jesus Christ, (viz. of) sending his Apostles,
 “ are manifest, and his giving to *them* alone the Power
 “ which was giv'n *him* from the Father, — whom we
 “ succeed,

ἀποστόλων, τοὺς αὐτοὺς γὰρ ἐκάλεον ποτὶ ἐπισκοπῆς καὶ ἑπιστάτας, τοὺς δὲ ἰδίᾳ κα-
 λώμενοι ἑπιστάτας. Ἀποστόλων ὠνόμαζον. Theod. on 1 Tim. 3. 1. Vol. III. p. 473.
Edic. Par. 1642. See also his Epist. to Phil. and Tit.

(x) Nemo ignorato salvatorem Episcopos Ecclesiis instituisse ; ipse enim pri-
 mus cum Coelos ascenderet, imponens Manus Apostolis, ordinavit eos Episcopos.
 Vid. Quest. in Vet. & Nov. Test. N. 97. Erat Episcop. Hypp. in Africa,
 Floruit A. D. 420.

(y) Manifesta est sententia Domini nostri Jesu Christi Apostolos suos mittentis,
 & ipsis solis potestatem a Patre sibi traditam permittentis, quibus nos successimus,
 eadem Potestate Ecclesiam Domini gubernantes. August. de Baptismo contra Do-
 natist. Lib. 7. cap. 43.

“ succeed, governing the Churches of God by the *same*,
“ or like Power.

Now all these undoubted Authorities which I have here produced, are abundantly sufficient to convince every serious and impartial Reader, that Episcopacy is of Divine, or Apostolical Institution, or Appointment, and consequently, ought to be transmitted to all succeeding Generations; unless those that differ from us can give us as good or better Authorities for the Discontinuance and Abolition of it, than we have done for its Institution and Perpetuity; neither of which can we ever expect. So that from what hath been already said upon this second General, we may safely infer, that as all these truly pious and venerable Fathers exercised and maintained this supreme Hierarchy all their Time; so have, or ought to do, all the orthodox Fathers and Churches of God from that Time to this, and till Time shall be no more. And truly, I never heard of any but one Father, and one (2) Presbyter in the Primitive Church that so much as pretended to oppose this holy Institution; and the first was St. *Jerom*, and the latter *Aerius*. But this *Aerius*'s Opinion was taken up and maintained purely through Prejudice and Revenge, because he was disappointed of a *Bishoprick*. (a) He was an ambitious aspiring Priest, and presumed that his Learning and Parts richly entitled him to a higher Degree in the Church than she thought proper to confer upon him; and for this Reason, arrogantly vied with, and opposed his own Order to that of hers; or indeed, boldly deny'd the Institution and Exercise of any Order superior to his own: But he receiv'd a just Recompence of Reward; for, besides declaring all such bold Pretences, and Ministerial Acts null and unlawful, the Church enroll'd him among the Number of Hereticks for so daring a *Presumption*. (b) Which
just

(2) It is true, the Presbyter *Colluthus* presum'd to ordain *Ischyra*, but he was publicly condemn'd for it as soon as discovered, and every pretended Ministerial Act, in consequence of it, declared unlawful and null, and then all was well; for it was publicly decreed in the Synod of *Alexandria* in *Egyp*, upon this Act of his, that *πᾶσα χεὶρ αὐτοῦ γέγονεν ἀκυροῦς* καὶ πάντες οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ κλησασθέντες ἐν τῷ σὺνεδρίῳ λαϊκῶς γέγοναν, καὶ ὕστερ συνάροστοι. *Athanas.* *Tom.* I. 732. Again,

Οἱ ὑπὸ Κολλῦθου κλησασθέντες ἀνίδεμοι ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς τόποις, εἰς ὃν καὶ πρῶτον ἐν Ἰσχυρᾷ, ὡς καὶ αὐτοῖς ἰσχυρῶς λαϊκῶς ἄρτον. *It.* p. 764. *Synod. Alexandr.* *An. Dom.* 319.

(a) *Viz.* of *Sebastia* in *Pontus*. *St. August. de Har.* § 52.

(b) *Epiphan. Hæret.* § 75.

Institution and Jurisdiction of BISHOPS. 33

just Judgment ought to be Warning sufficient to deter both the lower Orders in Christ's Church, w^z. the Presbyters and Deacons; and, particularly, any Lay-Sect whatsoever, from ever attempting to deny, or ev'n to vye with this supreme Order of Men for the future, lest they do but too justly fall at one Time or other into the same or worse Condemnation.

And, as for St. Jerom his opposing this Hierarchy, it was partly out of Revenge too; because he thought the Bishop of Jerusalem magnify'd his Office a little too much, in exercising too strict a Jurisdiction over him; and, partly, because the (c) *Deacons* of that Age were ready to take too much upon them, and to advance themselves above the Presbyters; therefore, he thought, he was under an indispenfible Obligation to bring them to Temper, and to fix their Pretensions upon a true Basis: But while he endeavoured to curb the Insolence of these daring Invaders on the one hand, he had like to have carried the Matter to as bad an Extreme on the other; since he says, that the Bishops themselves are not in any thing superior to the Presbyters, except in Point of Ordination (d): For thus; *Quid facit Episcopus, excepta Ordinatione, quod Presbyter non faciat?*

But it is further objected by our Dissenting Brethren, upon the supposed Authority of this Father, that he deny'd ev'n the Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy: And, to this End, they quote his Comment on the Epistle to Titus, c. 1. §. 7; alledging that he there saith, that the Episcopal Authority was not received 'till the Year 140 after Christ, and had not been then neither, but that the Presbyters begun to make Schisms in the Church; And this was the Reason that, (e) *It was decreed throughout the whole Earth that one, chosen from among the Presbyters, should be set over the rest, that the Seeds of Schism might be taken away.* (f) F And

(c) St. Jerom. Ep. 85.

(d) St. Jerom's Epist. ad Evag^g. And St. Chrysost. who writes thus, τῶν ἐκκλησιαστικῶν μόνον ὑπερβίβαντας, καὶ τοῦτο μόνον δόξαν πλεονεκτεῖν τοῦς ἱερεῖς. Rom. II. c. 1. 1120.

(e) In toto orbe decretum est ut Unus, de Presbyteris electus, super totos crearet ceteris, ut Schismatum semina tollerentur. Hieron. Ep. ad Tit. c. 1. Morit. An. Dom. 320.

(f) St. Jerom fell into this Mistake, because he observ'd the Apostles or Bishops were sometimes call'd Elders or Presbyters, in Scripture; and therefore was ready to conclude, that originally no Order was superior to them; but he was singular in this Notion, and so not to be depended upon.

And indeed, this seems to be a plausible Objection enough among those that are willing to be imposed upon by it; but the judicious, and those that have read and considered this Part of St. *Jerom's* Works, are not quite so credulous, especially because several learned and great Men have made it fully appear, ev'n from this as well as other Passages in his Writings, that there were settled Bishops, Fourscore, or near a Hundred Years before this Time, viz. in the Days of the Apostles; and, in the Sixty-third, or rather Fifty-second Year of our Lord. But *secondly*, suppose we should grant that this Quotation and Assertion of his were truly stated, and that he own'd no settled Bishops in the Church before this Time; yet surely we must not suffer this single Passage of this single Father to bear down the undoubted Reasonings and Testimonies of all those before-mentioned, since he, not flourishing 'till toward the latter End of the fourth Century, cannot be supposed to know the Mind of Christ and his Apostles so perfectly as those that liv'd in the Apostolick Age, and are express to the contrary, as I hope I have made it fully appear beyond all reasonable Contradiction: But especially, *Thirdly*, are we to suspect his Testimony and way of reasoning here, because he expressly owns in the Epistle above-cited, that Bishops were actually superior in Order to Presbyters, when he saith, *Quid facit, &c*; as also, when he saith, in another Place of that Epistle, (g) *ut sciamus Traditiones Apostolicas sumptas de veteri Testamento; quod Aaron, & Filii ejus, atque Levitæ in Templo fuerunt, hoc sibi Episcopi, Presbyteri, atque Diaconi vendicent in Ecclesia.*

That we may know that the Apostolical Constitutions, in maintaining this regular Hierarchy, are agreeable to Scripture, and particularly, in this Respect, to the Levitical Model; Whatsoever Aaron, his Sons the Priests, and the Levites were, in the Jewish, the very same, or correspondent thereunto, are the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, in the Christian Church.

Lastly, when he writes to *Nepotian*, and bids him be (h) *subject to his Bishop, or Chief Priest, and to look upon him as the Parent of his Soul.*

So

(g) *Viz. his Epist. ad Evagr.* See also T. II. Ep. 85. And in Psalm.
 (h) *Esio subje. tus Pontifici tuo, & quasi Animi Parentem suscipe.* Jerom's Epist. ad Nepot.

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So that if he should advance any thing against the Divine, or Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy, in this Comment, on the Epistle to *Titus*, or in any other Part of his Writings, he must contradict himself, which, we cannot suppose, he would, since it is manifest, that he reckoned several Bishops long before this supposed universal Decree, and Election of Bishops in every Church, in his Catalogue of Ecclesiastical Writers. (i)

Indeed, I must confess that *Calvin* seems to lay a great deal of Stress upon this Passage (k) of this Father; (altho', in other Parts of his Writings, (l) he approveth of the supreme Hierarchy of Bishops, viz. as it is exercised here in this Kingdom, as much as any Person; and so doth Mr. *Durel*, (m) one of his most noted Admirers, *Beza*, (n) and several others (o). But, if so notorious an Alteration had been really made, as is pretended, it is very strange that Primitive Antiquity should never take Notice of it, especially, because it would have been of so universal a Benefit to all succeeding Ages of the Church in its Measures both of Order and Government.

But, as nothing of this Nature hath, at any Time, been yet made appear, nor is it likely it ever should, we may rest very heartily satisfied, that Episcopacy hath been the constant Hierarchy of all Churches and Ages, from the Apostles, down to *Calvin's* Time soonest; that is, for 1500 Years successively; (p) And, if *Calvin* had been rightly understood, who only opposed the Papal, not Episcopal, Establishment, this supreme Hierarchy wou'd have been continued, in all Probability, without little, or no Interruption, throughout all the Ages of the Western Church. But admit further yet,

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Fourthly,

(i) *Jerom's Script. Ecclesiast. de Jacobo, &c.*

(k) *Viz. St. Jerom's Comment on the Epistle to Titus.*

(l) *Vid. Calvin's Institutions of the Christian Religion, Lib. 4. c. 4. § 2. It. his Epistle to Arch-Bishop Cranmer. It. his Epistle to the King of Poland. It. his Book de Necessitate Eccles. reformand.*

(m) *Mr. Durel's View of the Government and Worship in the Reformed Churches abroad.*

(n) *Beza's Traictat. de Minister. Evangel.*

(o) *Monsieur de L'Angle, in his Letter to the Bishop of London, Oct. 31. 1680. and several other Calvinistical Divines, both abroad and at home, in the following Part of this Discourse.*

(p) *So testifies Le Moynes, Professor of Divinity at Leyden in Holland, in his Letter to the Bishop of London, Sept. 3. 1680. His Words are these, For the Space of 1500 Years.....all the Churches of the World had no other kind of Government.*

Fourthly, and Lastly, that this great Change was really made in the Year of our Lord 140, as our Brethren from *St. Jerom* do here suggest, and consequently, that Episcopacy resteth only upon Ecclesiastical Authority; yet, ev'n this ought to oblige the succeeding Ages of the Church to pay a due Respect and Submission to it, till such Times as the Powers that gave this supreme Authority are pleas'd to take it away again; especially, since it comes the nearest to the old and new Model of Church Government, I mean that under the Jewish and Gospel Dispensations, of any we can find; and because it continues still to be so very convenient, and beneficial to the Publick Weal of Christ's Kingdom.

But now since no such Change hath been hitherto made by another such Universal Council, or Decree, we must conclude this second general Head with this positive Assertion, viz. that Episcopacy is, originally, not of Ecclesiastical, but of *Divine*, or *Apostolical* Appointment, (q) and the only rightful Church-Government; and that the Presbyterian Hypothesis hath no real Ground, from Scripture, Fathers, nor any regularly constituted Church in the whole World. The same will appear, if we consider in the

III. Third, and last Place, the perpetual Usage of the Church of *England* in particular, which hath always embraced this supreme Hierarchy, pursuant to Apostolical Canon and Practice, from the first planting of Christianity among us, and doth still embrace and injoin the uninterrupted Practice and Continuance of it under the strictest Obligation of both Conscience and Law.

But I shall treat as briefly as possibly I can upon this last Head; because, the great Excellency and Lawfulness of the Polity of our Church in general, and of this very essential Part of it in particular, will abundantly appear under the two following Heads, ev'n from the Testimonies of the most learned and judicious Nonconformists and Protestant Teachers themselves, both at *home* here and *abroad*; who could not, nor did they do less than publickly acknowledge, as most of them have several times over, that the present establish'd Church of *England*

is

(q) *Vid. Dr. Potter's Discourse of Church Government, p. 291.*

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is not only a true Church, but the very Eye and Bulwark of the whole Reformation; and consequently ought to be always submitted to, and obey'd in every Part of her Constitution, this of Episcopacy by no means excepted.

That Episcopacy hath been the Supreme Hierarchy of the Establish'd Church of *England* ever since it was a Church, in Conformity to our Blessed Saviour's, and the Apostolical Model of Church Government from the (r) purest Ages, is matter of Fact, without any Interruption, that I can find, in any of our Ecclesiastical Historians. And it may be manifestly proved, by every one of them, as far up as to between the 3d and 4th Century.

But without all Question, we had Bishops long before this time, even from the first planting of Christianity among us; although they are not so full in this Matter as might be desir'd. For we can hardly suppose that St. Peter, or St. Paul, who, as St. Clement saith, preach'd to the utmost Bounds (s) of the West, would leave us without Bishops.

This would have been to have left their Work half done, and those Converts they then made must of Necessity have wanted proper Officers, to confirm them in the Faith, and establish a compleat Church, which is what we ought by no means to imagine; especially, since the Learned Dr. Bull, in his Answer to the Bishop of Meaux's Queries, p. 72. expressly tells us, that "It is a firm'd by some Learned Men of the Roman Church, that our Britain receiv'd the Gospel before Rome. For Socrates confesseth that the Gospel was preached here from the first rising of it. And Baronius, from some Manuscripts in the Vatican, affixeth our Conversion to Christianity to the Thirty fifth Year of our Lord, which was near nine Years before the founding of the Roman Church." (t)

And, if so, Christianity must undoubtedly have been planted amongst us, either by the Apostles, or, some of their

(r) Vid. Tertull. de Prescript. c. 32. p. 212. Lib. 3. c. 20. 3. p. 232.

And before him Irenaeus,

(s) Ἐν τῇ ἑγῶν τῇ Δύσεω. Clem. 1 Ep. ad Cor. Cap. 5. Photius calls them Κόσμος τῇ ἀνατολῇ καὶ τῇ δύσει Bibliotheca, Sect. 126.

(t) Dr. Bull's Answer to Bp. of Meaux, p. 72.

their prime Commissioners soon after them; and consequently, since Episcopacy, or this Apostolical Church Government, was deny'd by no Party at that Time, but was the receiv'd Form of Church Government wherever a compleat Church was founded and established, we may rest fully assured that our *Britain* was planted and governed, from the very Rise of Christianity, by Men of this Supreme Order.

However, it undeniably appeareth by the Subscriptions at (u) *Nice*, *Arles*, (x) and *Arminium*, (y) that *Britain* sent Bishops to those Councils. And it is universally declared and allowed, that this Order usher'd in Christianity amongst us, and that there "could not be, " nor ever was a regularly constituted Church without " them. (z)

Nay, the very Patrons of the Presbyterian Cause themselves, in a full Synod, and when they govern'd the Nation, could not but confess that this Church was never govern'd by any of their pretended Orders since it was a Church. " It is true, say they, in respect of the " publick and open Profession, either of Presbytery, or In- " dependency, this Nation hath been a Stranger to each " Way, it is possible, ever since it hath been Chris- " tian. (a)

And now in Conformity to the Words and Design of Sacred Scripture, Fathers, and the constant Usage of the Church of God in all Ages, and particularly, this of our own, I shall set down an Authority, or two, taken out of the Articles and Liturgy of it, both of them being confirmed by several fundamental and perpetual Laws of this Realm, which strictly oblige us to support and maintain this Supreme Hierarchy, as it is now exercised here amongst us, and so conclude this Head.

To understand then who those Persons are that are to execute this Supreme Hierarchy, or, that are the Prime Ministers of Reconciliation between God and us; pursuant to the Ecclesiastical, as well as Statute, Law of this Realm, be pleased to consult (first) the 23d Article of our Church, and there you'll find that " It is not " lawful

(u) *Nice* Council held A. D. 324. (x) *Arles*, 314. (y) And *Arminium*, 359. (z) Ignat. Epist. ad Smyrn. (a) Independents Synod's Preface to their Declaration of Faith when assembled in the *Savoy*, A.D. 1648.

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“ lawful for any Man to take upon him the Office of
“ publick Preaching, or, ministring the Sacraments in
“ the Congregation, before he be lawfully called and sent
“ to execute the same : And those we ought to judge
“ lawfully call'd and sent, which be chosen and call'd
“ to this Work by Men who have publick Authority
“ giv'n unto them in the Congregation to call and send
“ Ministers into Christ's Vineyard.” And who those
are that have this publick Authority giv'n them, She
farther assures you when she tells you that they are the
BISHOPS, or, those Persons, only, who have a Com-
mission superior to that of Presbyters, and have an Epis-
copal Consecration, as you may plainly read and be en-
tirely satisfied in.

Secondly, in the Preface to the Form of making, or-
daining, and consecrating Bishops, Priests, and Deacons,
according to the Order of our establish'd Church ; which
runs thus ;

“ It is evident unto all Men diligently reading holy
“ Scripture, and ancient Authors, that, from the Apost-
“ les Time, there have been these Orders of Ministers
“ in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests and Deacons ; which
“ Offices were ever had in such reverend Estimation,
“ that no Man might presume to execute any of them,
“ except he were first call'd, try'd, examin'd, and
“ known to have such Qualities as are requisite for the
“ same ; and also by Publick Prayer, with Imposition
“ of Hands, were approv'd and admitted thereunto by
“ Lawful Authority. And therefore to the intent that
“ these Orders may be continued and reverently used and
“ esteemed in the Church of *England*, no Man shall be
“ accounted, or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or
“ Deacon in the Church of *England*, or suffer'd to exe-
“ cute any of the said Functions, except he be call'd,
“ tried, examined, and admitted thereunto, according
“ to the Form hereafter following, or, hath had former-
“ ly Episcopal Consecration, or, Ordination.”

And now, As one of these Passages that I have here
quoted is Part of the Doctrine, and the other of the
Liturgy of the Church of *England* ; So likewise have
they been, and are both still confirm'd by several Acts of
Parliament. They have not been ratify'd only by both
Houses of Convocation, but both Houses of Parliament
in several Reigns, and are made perpetual. Which,
one

one would think, should strictly oblige every one of us to the utmost of our Power, to maintain, or, at least, deter any Party of Men amongst us, at any Time for the future, from either assuming, or, confronting, this High Office, which is so expressly appointed and established both by the Laws of our Church, and the fundamental Laws of the Land.

Can any thing therefore be more firmly settled than this Supreme Hierarchy? Doth it not manifestly appear from the aforecited Preface, that, from the Apostles Days, or the Beginning of Christianity down to our Fathers, there ever have been Bishops? And do not the present Constitutions of the Realm, and the Liturgy, Canons, and Articles of our Church, which are confirm'd and enforced by them, publicly declare the same? And besides, do not they bind them upon us for ever? as also make us verily believe that every Ministration, without an Episcopal Ordination, is utterly null and unlawful? Why else do they require the Presbyterian Ministers themselves to be Episcopally ordained when they conform; or, otherwise forbid them, and indeed all other Dissenting Teachers, of what Denomination soever, to execute any Part of the Ministerial Office in our Communion? Nay farther, Are not all Persons bound in Conscience to submit to their lawful Diocesan's Jurisdiction and Government in all things that are not sinful, and that lie within his District, as being the only proper or chief Pastor appointed by Authority to require Obedience from them? And, if they do not thus submit themselves, are they not justly punishable by the Laws of the Church, (*b*) altho' they may be exempted by the Laws of the State?

And indeed doth not holy Scripture too lamentably assure us of this most notorious Truth, when it so severely admonisheth us of those many fatal Mischiefs and Judgments that publickly befell those prophane Wretches, which did not only unlawfully assume the Ministerial Office in general, but were disobedient to, and rebellious against their Supreme Spiritual Governors, that lawfully executed it in particular?

How

(*b*) 'Tis *Excommunicatio major*.

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How dare then our unhallowed Souls approach God's holy Mountain, lest they be consumed? How dare we touch the Ark of the Covenant, or, pretend to burn Incense on God's Altar, except we be *sent as was Aaron* (b) for fear the Earth should once more open and swallow us up for our wilful Sacrilege and Rebellion, as it too justly did those hardy Contemners of the Lord's Prophets, and their Mission, *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram?* Numb. ch. 16.

But to palliate this Matter, we are told that some Sacred Offices, if executed even by meer Laymen, are valid, and some not.

I shall mention only two; that is, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The latter of these our Brethren grant ought not to be administred by Layhands, because it is sinful, and the Law of the Land sufficiently (c) intimates so much, when it lays so considerable a *Penalty* upon the Administrator of it. But the other, that of Baptism, may; And when done, tho' it ought not to be done, they say, should be look'd upon as lawful, or, at least, valid, as to the Design, or Effect of it, let it be perform'd by what Hand soever.

Now, all that I shall answer to this Assertion under this Head is, that if there never was any Commission granted, or, Offices of this Nature allowed to be lawfully executed without *Episcopal Authority*, (d) as hath been sufficiently made appear from Scripture, Fathers, and the constant Usage of the Church of God in general, and of this of our own here in particular, from the purest Ages; then, notwithstanding no Penalties are appointed by Law, when a Person, not Episcopally ordain-

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ed,

(b) *Ἐκ οὗ γὰρ Ἰσχυρὲς ἐστὶν λαβεῖναι πᾶντις ἡ λαμπρότης τῆς θυσιασθείας τοῦ Θεοῦ*, saith *St. Clement*, 1 Ep. ad Cor. p. 40, 41; wherefore, pursuant to the Gospel Oeconomy, none pretended to execute any of the three Ministerial Offices in the Primitive Church, 'till they were lawfully called either by our Saviour himself, or some of the Apostles, or Successors of the Apostles. let them be otherwise never so well qualify'd to undertake them: as is undeniably manifest from the Records of the Primitive Church, and the Practice and Example of our Bless'd Saviour and his Apostles, plainly set down in Holy Scripture: Nay, it is undoubtedly manifest that our Saviour himself (altho' he had full Power over all Things both in Heaven and Earth) did not exercise any part of his Ministry, 'till he was outwardly commission'd. *Matth. 3. 16, 17. Heb. 5. 5. Rom. 10. 14, 15.*

(c) 100 l. by 14 Charles II.

(d) *Vid. Bp. Oxon of Church Government, p. 161, 217.*

ed, ordinarily administ'reth the Sacrament of Baptism; yet, (e) is the *Fact* no less ineffectual and unlawful; nor, as it is *Schismatical*, let it be perform'd by never so able a Hand, less criminal, or sinful.

For certainly, if it be an unlawful, or, sinful thing, to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper by a Lay-hand, (and every one we look upon to be so that hath not been ordained as above specified) it is likewise so to administer the Sacrament of Baptism, since the former is only a Recognition, whereas the latter is a solemn Stipulation of the Covenant we made with God when we were incorporated into his Church, and, thereby, made Members of Christ, Children of God, and Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven. But further,

(2.) That the Commission for empowering an Order of Men to administer this holy Sacrament of Baptism, is primarily lodged with, or, appropriated to those Apostolical Men we now call Bishops, is evident beyond all Contradiction, from the Words of the Commission itself, (*Matth. 28. v. 19.*) viz. *Go Ye and disciple all Nations, baptizing them, &c.*

For from this Portion of Scripture it is undeniably manifest that this Power is not granted to Mankind, nor indeed to Christian Men, promiscuously, and in general, but, to the eleven Apostles, or, Supreme Governors of Christ's Church, in particular. For, to them alone, or to Men of their Order alone, is it here said, *Go ye*, as is evidently recorded at the 16th verse of this Chapter, *Then the Eleven went away into Galilee into a Mountain where Jesus had appointed them—And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying; all Power is given unto me in Heaven and Earth, Go ye, and disciple all Nations by baptizing them, &c.*

Since then we are so fully assured who those Persons are that have this high Commission lawfully vested in them, and by whose Authority alone all holy Offices are primarily to be performed, I look upon the denial or want of it, where it may be conveniently had, one of the most fatal Mistakes that can happen to Christ's Kingdom, since

(e) Merito in Dies singulos Schismata & Hæreses surgunt—dum illis Advocacione quorundam & Authoritas præstat & Firmitas, dum Baptisma eorum defenditur, dum Fides, dum Veritas proditur, dum id quod contra Ecclesiam foris geritur, intus in ipsa Ecclesia vindicatur. Cypr. Ep. 74. p. 214.

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since I have made it plainly appear that no Ministerial Acts are ordinarily valid, which are not perform'd by those Persons that had their Commission from that Order of Men, we now call Bishops. And without all Question, this was the chief Reason that made that pious and learned Father *Ignatius*, just as he was going to suffer for the noble Defence he had made of this and other Parts of his most holy Profession, so very vehement against all those that opposed it, when he saith, "None but the *Bishop* (f) and such as are constituted, and ordained by him, have Authority to administer the Sacraments of *Baptism* and the Lord's Supper;" and, consequently the *Ministrations* of all others are null and ineffectual; and if there should be any that dare pretend to maintain a contrary Opinion, they oppose the Will of God, and are to be avoided by all good Christians: As also when he saith in another Part of this Epistle, (τ) "Whosoever doth any Spiritual Office without the Bishop, (that is, without being commissioned by him) he serveth the Devil."

St. Cyprian likewise insists upon the Necessity of an Episcopal Commission to execute any, and particularly these two holy Offices, especially, the latter of them, as earnestly as *Ignatius* doth, when he saith, that *valid Baptism cannot be administered without an Episcopal Commissioned Officer.* (b)

What inevitable Danger of losing their Souls then must all those Persons continually lie under, who carelessly enter themselves into the Pale of Christ's Church by such Officers as have no regular, or indeed, no Call at all! This Argument wants to be more seriously considered than, at present, it is by the generality of Mankind.

But, if a being entered into Christ's Mystical Body by an Episcopal Commissioned Officer certainly intitle us to all the Privileges of the Gospel, and infallibly put us in a state of Grace, which our dissenting Brethren will not deny, and the neglect or want of such a

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regular

(f) 'Οὐκ ἐξ ἑστὸς χαρὸς τῷ Ἐπισκόπῳ ἐπὶ βαπτίζειν, ἢ ἐκ τῆς τοῦ αἵματος ἀγάτης, &c. Ec. Epist. ad Smyr. c. 6.

(τ) 'Ο λαὸς Ἐπισκόπου πὺν πρὸς τῷ Διακόνῳ λατρεύει. St. Ign. Epist. ad Smyr. p. 7.

(b) *Enciclica super Episcopos const. edita*, Sc. omnis *Actus*, &c. Ep. 13. § 1.

regular Officer, leave us in a State of Nature, which they can never disprove, what must become of those that wilfully content themselves with the Performances of meer Lay-men? For, I think, I may now boldly say, that all are such that are not thus regularly sent into Christ's Vineyard, viz. as he hath appointed, and we have manifestly proved.

This Argument will hold good in Civil Policy, because how able soever we are to execute any Office in the Civil Government, our Acts are ordinarily of no Validity till we are put in Commission by lawful Authority.

So that, we are thus far advanced, viz. that there is a Regular and Supreme Hierarchy in Christ's Church, not instituted, or, executed by the People, as some pretend; but by the Power and Authority of our Blessed Saviour, (i) and his holy Apostles.

And thus having treated very largely of the Divine, or, Apostolical Institution of the Supreme Order of Bishops in Christ's Church, I shall, in the

II. *Second Place*, consider their Power of Jurisdiction, or, of *setting the things in order that are wanting* in it; which they may as lawfully challenge and exercise in their respective Churches, now, as Titus, the Bishop, or, Supreme Spiritual Governour, and Ruler of Crete, did, in his, then.

And to set this Matter also in a clear Light, it will be requisite to show that there is a Power lodged with the Supreme Governours and Rulers of Christ's Church to set the things that are wanting in it in as good Order as ever; or, to make such Laws, and exercise such Discipline, as will powerfully maintain Truth, and drive away Error, as will vigorously encourage Virtue and suppress Vice, as will inviolably preserve the Church's Peace, good Order and Unity; and lastly, such as will effectually restrain the disobedient and unruly, especially in these three following Particulars.

I. *First*, When one sort of People pretends to an unbounded Freedom from the Power and Authority of Ecclesiastical Laws.

II. *Secondly*,

(i) Athanasii Epist. ad Dracontium, Tom. 1. p. 264, 265. Edit. Paris 1690.

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II. *Secondly*, When another pretends to worship God in publick, where, when, and after what manner they please, without any regard to the publick Injunctions of an Orthodox Established Church.

III. *Thirdly*, and lastly, when another sort pretends to plead a Parliamentary Indulgence for all such unbounded Freedoms.

First then in Confutation of the first Pretence, viz. of all such Persons as plead an unlimited Freedom from the Power and Authority of Ecclesiastical Laws, I shall prove that there is a Power still lodged with the Supreme Governours and Rulers of Christ's Church to set the things that are wanting in it in as good Order as ever, or to make such Laws, Decrees or Canons as are judged necessary for the Maintenance and Advancement of the great Ends above mention'd; and that they are all conscientiously to be submitted to and obeyed so far as they extend; and consequently, an unlimited, or absolute Freedom from them can by no means be pretended.

And that this Power of Jurisdiction, or, Legislative and Executive Power was primarily left with the Supreme Governours and Rulers of Christ's Church, which we have evidently proved to be Bishops, seems to me to be very manifest, not only from that known Injunction of the Apostle, (*Heb. 13. v. 17.*) *Obey them that have the Rule over you and submit yourselves, for they watch for your Souls as they that must give Account*; and more fully, from the Words of my Text, *For this Cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in Order the things that are wanting*; as also, from the many undoubted Authorities of the Ancient Fathers afore quoted; but likewise from pure natural Reason, (i) and the Nature of the thing itself; because the Church of Christ is a Body of which he is the Head, and is a regular Society, consisting of Persons governing, and Persons governed, of Pastor and People. And, as it is a Society, there must of necessity be a supreme, or unquestionable Power lodged in it (k) of en-
acting

(k) Πάντα συμπεπνῆ, ὑποταγῇ μὲν χρῆται εἰς τὸ σωζέσθαι ὅλον Σαζιάδω οὖν ἡμῶν ὅλον τὸ πῶμα ἐν χειρὶ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ ὑποτασσάμεθα ἑκάστῳ τῷ πλησίον αὐτοῦ καθὼς καὶ ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ χαρίσματι αὐτοῦ. Clem. 1. Ep. ad Cor. p. 49.

(l) Dr. Doerlock's Vindication of Corpor. and Test Acts, p. 22.

acting Laws, Decrees, or, Canons of this Nature ; because, no Society whatsoever can long subsist without the inestimable Blessings of Peace, Order, and Unity ; and Peace, Order, and Unity can never be expected, without the Power of enacting such Laws, Decrees, or Canons, as effectually conduce to the Promotion of Virtue and the Suppression of Vice, to the Maintainance of Truth, Virtue, and Piety, and without a suitable, or, proper Authority to execute and enforce them : (1) And therefore, since the clearing of this Point is of such exceeding great Consequence to what follows, I shall enlarge very freely upon it, because the two following ones seem, in a great measure, to be concluded by it.

I assert therefore, that it is absolutely necessary, that there be an unquestionable Power of making and executing Laws, Decrees, or Canons, in Christ's Church, for the Ends above-mentioned ; and that this Power is primarily lodg'd in that Order of Men we now call Bishops : For tho' Christ has been pleased to leave a complete Body of Laws, or Canons, behind him, containing all necessary Articles of Faith, as well as practical Precepts or Duties, and, in a Word, all Requisites of Religion in general ; yet the great Ends of it, such as Truth, Virtue and Piety, cannot be effectually served, and Religion brought to a regular and vigorous Practice, without this standing legislative and executive Power, not only in the Church in general ; but likewise in every Provincial or National Church in particular.

This is absolutely necessary to fix and determine the moral Circumstances of Religion in it ; I mean, the Time, Place, and Manner of worshipping God in publick. It is necessary also to determine the accidental Controversies that may arise in Matters of Religion, *i. e.* to censure Heresy and Error, and to promote and secure an uniform Piety throughout every Part of it.

But now it is manifest, that the sacred Canon hath not left a particular Determination of these Matters ; and, indeed, they are such as cannot well be determin'd by universal Laws, that are to reach all People, Times, and Places ; and therefore, the Holy Ghost seems to have done no more than to grant a general Commission to the
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(1) This intimated from 1 Cor. 4. 21 ; 2 Cor. 7. 15 ; 2 Cor. 1. 23 ; 2 Thes. 3. 6, 14 ; 1 Tim. 1. 20 ; 1 Cor. 5. 3, 4, &c. 2 Cor. 2. 6, 10.

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Governors and Rulers of their respective Churches, by virtue of which they might discharge it as they saw convenient, viz. according to the present Circumstances and Emergencies of their particular Charges.

Their Commission may be resolved into these following Instructions, viz. That Care be taken not to lay upon the People any unnecessary Things; that Care be taken that nothing be impos'd contrary to the Word of God, or, that carrieth just Cause of Scandal in it; that all things be done to Edification, to promote the great Ends of Truth, Virtue, and Piety; and, that all things be done according to the Laws of Decency, Order, and Unity, and to the Glory of God. But further,

(2.) That there is a Necessity of a standing legislative and executive Power in the Governors and Rulers of every national or particular Church to settle Matters of this Nature, appeareth from the Proceedings of the Apostles and the Primitive Church: For, after they had publish'd the Christian Faith, form'd a Church, and confirm'd the Disciples in the Belief of it, there arose a Controversy in the Church at *Antioch*, about Circumcision, and the Observance of the Ritual Law; and, it is very probable it had thrown the whole Church into endless Divisions and Distractions, had not the Supreme Governors, the Apostles, or Bishops, and Elders of it, interposed, and, after mature Deliberation, drawn up some Canons upon it.

The Form is recorded in *Acts* 15. v. 28. *It seem'd good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater Burden than these necessary things.*

Again, we find several Irregularities in the Church of *Corinth*, as to their publick Assemblies, the Celebration of the Lord's Supper, and the publick Worship of God in general. And tho' their Apostle, or Bishop, *St. Paul* himself, bestow'd an Epistle to adjust the greatest Part of them, yet we find some remaining to his next Visitation; for he tells them, that *other things he would set in order when he came among them*, (1 *Cor.* 11. 34.) And no doubt but he did, altho' we have no Records about them.

Now, this is an unquestionable Argument, that there must be a constant Governing or Ruling Power left with the supreme Governors and Rulers of Christ's Church in general, and consequently with the supreme Governors and Rulers of every National, or Provincial Church
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in particular, to answer all such-like occasional or accidental Emergencies : For, that this Power extended beyond the Apostles to the Governors and Rulers of the Church, their immediate Successors, (and, if to them, no doubt to latest Posterity, unless it can be proved to the contrary from Scripture, Reason, or the Nature of the Thing itself, as it is highly impossible it ever should) is undeniably manifest from these two following Authorities, since we find a Delegation made to *Timothy*, *And these Things give in Charge*, (1 Ep. 5. 7.) but more expressly to the Governor of the Church of *Crete*, in the Words of my Text, where the Apostle tells us, that *for this Cause he left him in Crete, that he might set in order the things that were wanting*, that is, not only in this, or in these two particular Churches at that Time, but likewise in these, and all other Christian Churches, 'till Time shall be no more : For, whatever these Injunctions were that are here given by the Apostle, we do not find them upon Record, as a standing Rule, binding to these, or other particular Churches, exclusive of others ; and therefore we must conclude, that such Matters were left to the Prudence of the supreme Governors and Rulers of their respective Churches in general, I mean, within their respective Jurisdictions, to all succeeding Generations. And truly, it cannot be deny'd, but that this Governing, or Ruling Power, was constantly exercis'd in the best and purest Ages of the Church, as an inherent, or undisputed Right perpetually belonging to the Governors and Rulers of their respective Churches.

(3.) But to enlarge a little more upon this Head : Since 'tis indisputably manifest, that Christ hath instituted a governing or ruling Power in his Church, he must necessarily invest it with a suitable or proper Authority to support itself, and to carry on the important Ends and Designs of it, ev'n tho' there were not the least Authorities of Revelation for it. The Voice of natural Reason, as I said, plainly directs it, and the Practice of every governing Power entirely confirms it ; and therefore, since our Blessed Saviour, in his second and last Revelation, hath no where descended to express any particular Laws for the Discipline and Order of the Church in future Ages, but rather left a few general Rules for the enacting such Laws, according to the accidental Emergencies of every particular Church ; nay, rather, since it
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seems to be morally impossible to draw up a Body of Laws to answer all Emergencies of every particular succeeding Church, with respect to its Order and Jurisdiction; it must unavoidably follow, ev'n without the Voice of Revelation, that there is a perpetual governing or ruling Power lodg'd in the Christian Church; and that it may, and ought to be exercised by the respective Governors and Rulers of it in every Age, pursuant to Apostolical Canon and Practice.

And indeed, this is abundantly confirm'd ev'n by the Canons and Practice of the Jewish Church; for it is indisputably manifest, that the Hour for daily Sacrifices, the erecting of Synagogues throughout all the Parts of the Country for hearing the Word, and for Prayer; the Order of Burial, and Rites of Marriage, rested purely upon Ecclesiastical Authority; for they were no where prescrib'd in the written Canons, that I can find; and consequently, we may presume, were instituted by the Church's Discretion: And yet these were Institutions, no doubt, highly approv'd of by God, and binding to the People. But now, this is an Instance that, with considerable Advantage, asserts the Power of Jurisdiction, or of a legislative and executive Power in the Christian Church: For, *first*, it is undeniably evident, that God had made a most ample Provision of Ecclesiastical Laws in the Jewish Church for carrying on, (one should have thought) all the Parts of Discipline and Worship he had instituted in it; insomuch that he left particular Laws to determine most of the Branches or Circumstances of it. *Secondly*, They enjoy'd extraordinary Assistances of Prophecy to resolve all Doubts and Scruples under all sorts of Emergencies; but now these are Advantages which the Christian Church cannot pretend to. If therefore the Jewish Church, notwithstanding all these Advantages, enacted positive standing Laws of her own, much more, surely, may the Christian Church enact Laws of the same Nature, for the Advancement of the great Ends of Religion and the publick Worship of God.

And thus having asserted the Church's Authority in general, to set the Things in Order that are wanting in it, (*i. e.*) by making such Laws, Decrees, or Canons, as seem necessary for the Preservation of Truth, Peace, and Piety, and the publick Worship of God, and consequently such as manifestly oblige the People, so far as they

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extend, to pay a regular and uniform Obedience to them, I shall now show more particularly, tho' very briefly, how this Authority cometh to be exercis'd, so as to become binding to, or strictly to be obey'd by every one of them in every particular or national Church. And in order to make this the more clearly appear, I shall enquire how particular, or national Churches came to be formed, and the Bounds of their Jurisdiction fix'd, especially, after the Apostolick Age, and after the Empire became Christian.

First then, it may be observ'd that, in the first Times, a great many had their Original from the Apostles, or their immediate Substitutes; for where Christianity obtain'd to any considerable Degree, there, no doubt, a Church was generally form'd, and the Bounds of it fix'd: And, where the Region, or Country was large, and several Bishops were engaged in propagating the Faith, there, we may presume, their respective Boundaries were settled by mutual Consent and Agreement.

But the clearest and most received Accounts of the Church inform us, that the Model of particular Churches was generally taken from that of the Civil Government. The Seat of the chief Magistrate was the Seat of the Bishop, that is, in some City, and so took in the Parts adjacent to it: And, the Original of Primates and Metropolitans undoubtedly resteth upon the same Foundation, as appeareth from the Constitution of the *Roman Empire*; For, the See of the Archbishop was the Metropolis, or chief City of a Province, and the See of the Patriarch was the chief City in the Imperial Diocess. This, as I take it, was generally the receiv'd Model of the Ancient Church: However, it is certain that the Authority, upon which particular Churches are founded, is not Monarchical; that is, the Order and Government of Patriarchs and Metropolitans depend only upon the Authority of Ecclesiastical Institution, and that of the Empire: For, without all Question, the Civil Power, upon the yielding up of the Sceptre to the Cross of Christ, is invested with an Authority * to inspect the Affairs of the Church, so as not only to protect her from Violence and Oppression, but

* The Dissenters flatly deny this Authority; for they claim it independently of the State, in every Respect; for they claim it all as the *Law of Christ*, over which no *human Power* hath Authority, since a leading Person of that Persuasion positively says, that *the Government we plead for is no other than the Execution of the Laws of Christ*.

but to call Synods, to inspect their Decrees, with respect to the Rights and Safety of the State, as well as the Safety and Well-being of the Church; to ratify and confirm them, ev'n those that concern the very Constitution, Model, or outward Government of the Church: For, all this may be justly included in the Notion of nursing Fathers, and nursing Mothers of the Church.

These Things being laid down for Principles, we must conclude, that the Civil Power of every State, or Nation, upon the Dissolution of the *Roman* Empire, might, with the Concurrence of the Ecclesiastical, establish a Church-Government within their respective Dominions, provided it be done according to the Primitive and Apostolical Model. And a Church, that hath both Civil and Ecclesiastical Authority for its Establishment, undoubtedly resteth upon a double Authority, and both Divine; no less than the Ordinance of God; and therefore every Person that is a Member of it, is indispensably oblig'd to submit to it. And this is the Establishment of the Church of *England* in particular; and therefore it is founded upon an Authority that cannot, with the least Colour of Reason, be disputed; and consequently, it challengeth an indisputable Power to make and execute Laws for the Ends afore-mention'd; without which *the Church, as a Society, cannot subsist, and, by which, our national Constitution, next under Christ, is chiefly supported, saith the Lower House of Convocation, in their late Representation to the Higher.* [p. 22. dat. May 10. 1717.]

And now having, likewise, sufficiently, tho' very briefly, asserted the Authority of particular, or national Churches in making Laws, and evinced how such Laws must necessarily be binding to every private Person, or Member of them; I know no Colour of Argument that can be pretended from Scripture, to evade the Force of what hath been offer'd, but that which some, especially, of late, have shamefully misapply'd; I mean, an Injunction which was annex'd to both the Jewish and Gospel-Dispensation.

Thus, in the Jewish Canon, *thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it,* [Deut. 12. 32.] And, in the Close of the Gospel, *If any Man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the Plagues that are written in this Book,* [Rev. 22. 18.] From whence some mis-guided Judgments would gladly infer, that nothing is binding but

what is positively commanded in holy Scripture, that Ecclesiastical Laws are an Affront to the Perfection of it, and, in a Word, an Encroachment upon the Liberties of a Christian.

But, in the *First* place, 'tis manifest, the Jewish Oeconomy enjoy'd a Body of Laws so very full and particular, that one wou'd have believ'd, they had been abundantly sufficient for the Conduct of that People, as well in temporal as spiritual Affairs; and yet we have instanced in several Laws relating to the publick Worship of God in particular, whose Authority was always unquestionable, without ever being esteem'd an Addition to the sacred Canon.

But further, *Secondly*, if nothing be of Force but what is positively commanded in holy Scripture, I know not how the Laws of the Civil Power can obtain Credit, or Authority; or, how the Civil Power challengeth a Legislative Power: For, tho' Obedience is commanded to the Higher Powers in general, yet, the Power of making Laws in particular, is less specify'd in Scripture, than it is concerning the Governors and Rulers of the Church, as plainly appeareth from what hath been already deliver'd. But now it is evident, that this Power of making Laws was never disallow'd, in Civil or Ecclesiastical Superiors, by our blessed Saviour; neither can a Body of such Laws be esteem'd an Addition to the Word of God, nor a Detraction from it, unless they are advanc'd in Opposition to it, or fix'd upon a higher, or at least, an equal Authority with it, so as to command as great, or greater Veneration or Regard than the express Laws of God. This, indeed, were really to establish a Piece of Will-Worship, and make the Commands of God of none Effect; which, and which only, were the chief Reasons why our Saviour censured the Traditions of the Jewish Church, that, by a voluntary Humility, held not the Head.

It is certain then, that the Laws of our Ecclesiastical Superiors have a binding Force and Authority contain'd in them; because, as long as they are orthodox, and just, and tend to the Promotion of any religious Design or End, they bear the Authority and Seal of Heaven it self upon them, are the very Ordinance of God, and are as conscientiously to be obey'd and submitted to, as if they proceeded immediately from God; for, they are
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the Laws of God's Vicegerents, that have receiv'd a Commission from him; and, if they act in pursuance to this Commission, the Obedience that is paid to it, is in reality paid to God; for it is a Submission to an Ordinance which God hath instituted. And this is no more than what the Apostle (in *1 Pet. 2. 16.*) intends, when he enjoins a Submission from us as the Servants of God.

But yet, notwithstanding this, we constantly observe a just Decorum between Human and Divine Laws; for, the Submission that is paid to them is different.

Divine Laws, or the Laws of God, are infallibly true, just, and good, and are to be submitted to as soon as we know they are God's Laws, ev'n without examining the Nature, or Composition of them; but the Laws of God's Vicegerents, whether in Church or State, may be materially evil, erroneous, or sinful; and not to be submitted to, before we have examin'd the Nature and Design of them; and are satisfy'd, as far as possible, as to the Innocence of them.

Further, as for the Laws of the Church, we do not rank them among the Essentials of Religion, as Articles of Faith, or absolute Conditions of Salvation; for, we say, that they are only Circumstantials of Religion, or necessary Requisites and Provisions, to preserve the Canon of Faith, and to promote and carry on the great Duties of Christian Worship, Truth, Purity, and Holiness.

And tho' there is an absolute Necessity for the Authority in general, I mean, that there should be Laws of this kind, and consequently, it is a convincing Demonstration of the Duty of Submission to those that are enacted; yet, we grant, that there may be several Laws that may, with equal Success, serve the same End, and therefore the Law that is injoin'd, may not only be changed, but might be in its own Nature indifferent before it was commanded; and yet, after all this, when the Church hath made Choice of this or that Law, tho' indifferent in its own Nature, it ought to be submitted to, and obeyed as the Ordinance of God; and the wilful Contempt of it, without a sincere Repentance, will, in the Apostle's Sense, receive the Recompence of all other wilful Sins.

From what hath been said then, it is abundantly manifest, that Ecclesiastical Laws no way injure the Perfection

tion of the sacred Canon, by adding to, or diminishing from it; and consequently, what hath been already deliver'd, concerning the Authority of Ecclesiastical Laws, remains firm and unshaken.

Upon the Whole, therefore, it undeniably appeareth, that Christ hath invested the Supreme Governors and Rulers of his Church with a Power of making Laws for the Maintainance of Peace, Order, and Unity; and, for the Advancement of the great Ends of Religion, Truth, Purity, and Holiness; and, that these Laws are to be submitted to, and obeyed, within the proper Verge of them, as the Ordinance of God; and consequently, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake; or, upon those Laws of Fealty and Obedience we all of us lie under upon the account of their being God's Ordinances; and therefore it is a vain Conceit to pretend to a lawless or ungovernable Freedom from them; or so much as to gainsay or withstand even the reasonable or just Laws of our Ecclesiastical Superiors. This were to give our selves a Latitude to cancel God's own Ordinances at pleasure; a Piece of Liberty, truly, that must turn all Religion out of Doors, and, at last, tempt us not only to dispute, but reject the Supreme Authority of God himself by a pretended Charter or Grant from his own Hands.

Thus, having very largely prov'd what ample Authority Christ hath left with his Church to make Laws, and to set the things in order that are wanting in it, not only by obliging the Members of the Christian Church in general, but of every Provincial or National Church in particular, strictly to obey and submit to them; I shall proceed, with the same Impartiality and Plainness, to confute the

II. Second false Notion another Sort of People have lately entertain'd of Church-Authority and Communion, viz. When they pretend to worship God in publick, where, when, and after what Manner they please, without any Regard to the Injunctions of an Orthodox, Establish'd, National Church.

But truly, this hath, in a great measure, appeared already, by what hath been offer'd upon the last Head; For, it hath been sufficiently prov'd, that the Governors and Rulers of the Church of Christ, in general, are invested with a Power of making and executing Laws; and,

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it hath been likewise fully proved, that the Governors and Rulers of every particular or National Church are authoris'd to exercise this Power so as to become binding to the People of every respective Church or Nation to which they belong. So that, in order to the clearing of the Controversy here before us, we are now only to enquire into the *Extent* of this Power, I mean, with respect to the *Subject-Matter* of it, and our Work is done.

And truly, the Instances, which Scripture affords us, of a legislative and executive Power, (some of which have been touch'd upon under the preceding Head) give us a full Information of its Extent or Latitude. But, had holy Scripture been wholly silent in the Case, the very Nature and Reason of Things instruct us, that the Governors and Rulers of every particular or national Church are authoris'd to make such Laws as are sufficient to support the Being of their Church, as it is a complete religious Body or Society; such Laws as are sufficient to maintain the Peace, Order, and Unity of it, and to carry on the great Ends of Religion, viz. Truth, Purity, and Holiness. So that they are indisputably empower'd to make Laws, not only to inspect the Lives and Actions of their People, to censure Vice and Error, and encourage Virtue and Piety; but to carry on the publick Worship of God; and, in a Word, to enact Laws to answer all accidental Emergencies that may attend any particular or national Church.

Therefore we must conclude, that it is the special Care of all Church-Governors to form every particular Church into a regular Society; and, in order to this End, to fix and determine the *Time*, *Place*, and *Manner* of *Publick Worship* *; to assign the Bounds of Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, and the Limits of the Pastoral Function; to ordain and constitute fit Persons to labour in their respective Parishes; and to oblige the People of every Parish to yield Obedience to all such Laws.

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* To this purpose writeth St. Clement, in his 1 Ep. ad Corinthios, Πάντα τάς τε ποιῶν ὁρτολόμῃ ὅσα ὁ Δεσπότης ἐπιτελεῖν ἐκέλευσεν καὶ Καρπὸς τιναγμάτων, τὰς δὲ προσφορὰς καὶ λειτουργίας ἐπιτελεῖν καὶ ἡ εὐχὴ, ἡ ἀνάκλισις ἐκέλευσεν γίνεσθαι, ἀλλ' αἰετὸς μόνος Καρπὸς καὶ αἴματι. p. 52. And, to the due Observance of these he alligues a Blessing; for, says he, in the next Page, Ὅτι τοῖς προστάγμασι Καρπὸς ποιῶντες τὰς προσφορὰς ἀναγὰς ἐν προσκυνοῖσι, καὶ μελέται.

It is certain that these are Provisions absolutely necessary for these important Ends ; yea, such Provisions as these are *essential* to the forming any Church, or People, into a regular Society ; and, were a Set of Persons authorised and disposed to enter into Society, there must be an Authority and Laws of the like Nature to support and maintain it.

Since then this outward Polity seems to be so very necessary not only in ours now, but in every other orthodox establish'd Church, so far as we can find, in former Ages ; how strange must it appear to every impartial and Christian Reader to find some People endeavouring to make the World believe, that there is no occasion for *any such particular Methods*, or Ways of divine Worship ? Or, with others, that there was so great a Diversity of Rites and Ceremonies in the ancient Churches, that they all of them varied from one another in every neighbouring Village, or single Congregation ? For, after one of this Persuasion hath told us, that ' A single Congregation was a competent Charge for a primitive Bishop, ' —he adds, that *Each of such Churches had Power to govern and order it self, and so followed such Orders as every Church thought fit, without being obliged to conform to those of others.* They had no Rule nor Order in things of this Nature requiring invariable Observance, nor did they regard such Uniformity, as others, many Hundred Years after, in Ages as many times worse, seem'd fond of. None of those Churches used the same Prayers, nor the Lord's Prayer, but only at the Eucharist. All of them had not the same Creed, nor used any of their publick *Worship* but what was repeated by their Catachumens at Baptism, or the Lord's Supper ; nor the same Way in confirming, marrying, or burying. They used not the same Mode either in reading the Scriptures, or singing.—They differ'd in their Habits and Postures.—Such as this, and, what might be shew'd in more Instances, was the Uniformity of the ancient Churches. That which is now admir'd appears to be a meer Novelty.

But, with humble Submission to better Judgments, I should rather think that the publick Worship of God, in a regular uniform Way, should be look'd upon to be so far from being a particular Method, or meer Novelty, that we should judge it to be the ultimate End of the Faith

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Faith and Obedience of the *antient* as well as *present* Church; because God seems to require an *uniform Obedience* * and *Profession* of our Faith, as an indispensable Term of our Salvation throughout every Period of it; not only because the Apostle saith, *with the Mouth Confession is made to Salvation*, Rom. 10. v. 10. † which, in the former Part of the 13th Verse, implieth, that it be done by every one of the Faithful at all Times, as Occasion requireth; and then may they reasonably expect, as he adds in the latter Part of it, *to be saved*; but also because it is the Bond of every Congregational, and National Church, and is likewise the great Testimonial of the Unity and Communion of the *Holy Catholick Church*; viz. that we all own and profess one God and Father of us all, one Faith, one Spirit, one Lord, and one Baptism. ††

But more fully yet; It is well known, that when we assemble our selves together, in publick as well as in private, *we are to glorify God in our Souls, and in our Bodies*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. therefore we ought to do it with one Heart, one Mind, and one Mouth; or, in one Way of publick Worship, both in Soul and Body; and, consequently, we must perform it after a decent, solemn, and uniform Manner. And all this evidently concludes, that the publick Worship of God, as well as the Time, Place, and Manner or Form of it, is to be prescrib'd and determin'd, and consequently, it must be an indispensable Duty, ev'n the Ordinance of God, to yield an entire Obedience to all such Decrees, otherwise, we are manifestly guilty of the Breach of the Apostle's Canon, viz. *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves*; and therefore must grievously offend, or sin against God's holy Ordinance.

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* Thus St. Clement, Ἡμεῖς ὡς ὁμοῦντα ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ συναχθέντες ὡς ἓξ ἰν' εἰς εἷμα (scil. Θεόν) 1 Ep. ad Cor. p. 44.

And thus St. Basil, Πάντες ὡς ἓξ ἰν' εἰς εἷμα καὶ μιᾷ καρδίᾳ, τοῦ τ' ἐξομολογήσασθαι ψαλμὸν ἀναρέμεσι τῷ Κυρίῳ. Ep. 63.

And thus likewise St. Ignatius, Ἀντὶ τοῦ ἑπτακῆτους—μνηστὴν πρὸς τοὺς ἀλλὰ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ μιᾷ προσευχῇ, μιᾷ διανοίᾳ, &c. Ep. ad Magnes. p. 33.

As also St. Cyprian de Unitat. Eccl. l. 4. p. 108. Edit. Oxon.

† See also 2 Tim. 1. 8. Matth. 10. 32 Deut. 32. 12.

†† * There is not any thing (saith a very learned and judicious Prelate) that makes any Number of Men to be one Society, which doth not equally, or in a more perfect Manner, belong to all the Members of the Christian Church: They are subject to the same Head, live under the same Laws, have the same religious Worship, and enjoy the same common Privileges.

And to this seems the pious Mr. Gifford, an old Non-conformist Minister, very heartily to agree (in the Preface to his second Treatise against the Donatists, as he calls 'em, or Separatists from the Church of *England* in his Time, who absented themselves from the Publick Worship of God, on Account of the Common Prayer, or one uniform Way of Publick Worship) when he saith, 'Some are proceeded to this, that they will come to the Assemblies to hear the Sermons and Prayers of the Preacher, but not to the Prayers of the Book, which I take to be a more grievous Sin than many suppose.'

Mr. Calvin likewise, tho' the Founder of these Separatists, is so very express and vehement for an uniform Way of Publick Worship throughout all their Churches, that he compos'd a Publick Form of Prayer for the *Sunday*, or Publick Service, himself. For this see his 87th Epistle; as also Mr. Baxter, Mr. Owen, and several others of that Persuasion, in their Works to this Purpose.

So that from what hath been already offer'd upon this second Head we may safely infer, that an uniform Way of Publick Worship was formerly approved and prescribed not only by the ancient, as well as our own Church; but likewise by the most learned and serious of the Dissenting Teachers themselves, and is to be conscientiously submitted to and obeyed, pursuant to the Injunctions and Practice of the Church in all Ages; at least, so far forth as it is not inconsistent with the Canon of Scripture, and, particularly, the Words afore-quoted, and those of my Text, which manifestly imply an entire Submission and Obedience to every thing that is not sinful, which the Church, at any Time of its being, thinks fit to appoint; and therefore this second Pretence of worshipping God in publick, where, when, and after what Manner Men please, contrary to the Injunctions of an orthodox establish'd Church, falls to the Ground.

It plainly followeth then, from what hath been said upon this last Proposition,

(First,) That the Governors of every particular or national orthodox Church have Power, not only to prescribe and determine the Form of Publick Worship in general; but the Place, Time, and Manner of it also in particular, so as to oblige every one of the People under their Care, to a conscientious and strict Observance of it. They have a full and clear Commission from God for it.

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It is the very Ordinance of God. The Place, Time, and Manner or Form of Publick Worship, are moral Circumstances that are mixt with the very Nature of the Ordinance; all which must be determin'd, and agreed upon, or it is impossible the Ordinance can be regularly solemniz'd: They are to be indispensably submitted to, and obey'd; or else, how can the great and excellent Laws of Peace, Order, and Uniformity be maintain'd? Therefore, for private Persons to set up Places of Publick Worship (let them pretend to never so much Sincerity in their respective Persuasions) where, when, and after what Manner they please; or, to refuse to join in the orthodox establish'd Church, after that Form and Manner, or in those Rites and Ceremonies that are appointed or prescribed, (provided there be nothing materially evil or sinful in them) is so far from being the Badge of a sincere Christian, that it is exactly the Livery of an unaccountable Libertine, besides its being a manifest Violation of the Peace, Order, and Unity of the Church, and consequently an Obstruction to the great Ends of Divine Worship, Purity, Piety, and Devotion; and, not only so, but it is likewise a manifest Resistance, or Despight done to God's holy Ordinance: The first, as it is a Violation of the Unity of the Church, is directly schismatical and sinful: And the latter, as it implies an open Contempt of the Great God, and his Divine Law, prophane, rebellious, and detestable. But, to proceed,

(*Secondly,*) It hath been abundantly demonstrated and concluded, that a particular, or national orthodox establish'd Church is a regular Body, or Society, consisting of Persons governing, and Persons governed: That the governing Powers are, in an especial Manner, concerned to erect and complete an uniform Scheme of Publick Worship, as the great Design of this religious Society, and an Argument of its Compactness and Unity: Therefore, it can never be the Badge of a sincere and peaceable Christian to separate, or withdraw from this one Altar of Divine Worship; yea, rather, for private Persons to erect a distinct Altar of Divine Worship within the Bowels of a national, orthodox, establish'd Church; that is, within the known Limits of her Jurisdiction, creates a manifest Rupture in this religious Body or Society, and consequently, is directly contrary to a religious Peace, good Order and Uniformity, and therefore is manifestly schismatical and sinful. I 2 And,

And, indeed, this is entirely agreeable to the most learned and judicious of our late Protestant Dissenters and Teachers here at Home, as well as the Reformed Divines, or Teachers Abroad ; as I promised under a former Head, to make sufficiently appear, and shall now endeavour to discharge my Promise, as satisfactorily as I can, in the following Pages. In the mean time, it may not be amiss, perhaps, to premise, that notwithstanding all these Men dissented, as to their private or personal Persuasions, from several of our establish'd Ceremonies, or Parts of our Discipline (as indeed, what Assembly, Church, or Community in the whole World agreeth with every thing establish'd in every other Assembly, Church, or Community ?) yet, I do not find that any one of them thought themselves at liberty to set up another Altar of Divine Worship in Opposition to it ; but to be bound in the strictest Ties of Conscience, as well as Law, to communicate with it ; and accordingly they did always communicate with us on publick Days set apart by our Church for Divine Worship, if not as Ministers or Teachers, yet, as religious and attentive Hearers ; and moreover very earnestly pressed all their Followers to do the like ; publickly declaring the great Sin and fatal Consequences that would inevitably befall them, and the publick Weal of Christ's Kingdom, if they did not. And

(*First*), Of those Protestant Dissenting Teachers here at Home, that publickly condemned their Followers for separating on Publick Days of Worship from our Communion. And first, of the judicious and learned Mr. Baxter, who writeth thus to the separate Congregations.

“ The Hand of God is apparently gone out against
 “ your Ways of Separation. You see you do but pre-
 “ pare Persons for a farther Progress ; Seekers, Ranters,
 “ Quakers, and too many professed Infidels, do spring
 “ up from among you, as if this were your Journey's End,
 “ and the Perfection of your Revolt. *

Mr. Gifford also, whom I quoted before, in the Preface to his first Treatise against the Donatists, or Separatists of England, writeth thus ; “ They make a vile
 “ Schism, rending themselves from the Church of En-
 “ gland,

* Baxter's Epistle to separate Congregations.

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“ gland, and condemning, by their Assertions, the
 “ whole visible Church in the World, ev’n as the Do-
 “ natists did of old; † and consequently, are guilty of
 a great Sin.

The same *Gifford*, in the Preface to his second Treatise before mentioned, speaking of the same Sort of People, goeth a great deal further, and saith, that “ this is
 “ not the worst, for sundry are gone further, and fallen
 “ into damnable Schism; and the same is so much the
 “ more fearful and dangerous, in that many do not see
 “ the Foulness of it, but rather hold themselves as god-
 “ ly Christians. *

Mr. *Parker*, likewise, another eminent Nonconformist, in one of his Letters, is most violent against the Separatists of his Time. “ It grieveth me no little, saith he,
 “ that Satan should be so impudent as to fling the Dung
 “ of that Sect into my Face, which, with all my Power,
 “ I had so vehemently resisted, during the whole Course
 “ of my Ministry in England; ** seeing that None, (as
 he saith of themselves in another Place) hath confuted them more
 then we, or wrote more against them.

And more to our Case still in the *Grave Confutation* of the Errour of the Separatists, published in the Name of the old Nonconformists; wherein they ingenuously confess all that is desired of them. Their Words are these:

“ Because we (meaning the Church of England) have
 “ a true Church, consisting of a Lawful Ministry, and a
 “ faithful People, therefore they cannot separate them-
 “ selves from us, but they must needs incur the most
 “ shameful and odious Reproach of a most manifest
 “ Schism: †† And they that are guilty of this; or as
 they express themselves in another Place, “ continue
 “ in this Schism, we hold them all to be in a dange-
 “ rous Estate.

The Independent Teachers also of *New England*, who went out from us, acknowledge the same, viz. that,
 “ to separate from a Church for some Evil only concei-
 “ ved, or indeed, in the Church, which might, and
 “ should be tolerated and healed with a Spirit of
 “ Meekness, and of which the Church is not as yet con-
 “ vinced,

† *Gifford's first Treatise.* * *Gifford's second Treatise.* ** *Parker's Letter,*
 †† *Grave Confutation.*

“vinced, tho’ perhaps your self be; for this, or the
 “like Reasons, to withdraw from publick Communion,
 “in Word, Seals, or Censures, it is unlawful and sin-
 “ful.*

And so much for our late Protestant Dissenting Teachers here at Home, who utterly detested, and condemned a separate Altar of divine Worship, altho’ they could not, nor did not conform as Teachers, nor mightily approved of some Parts of our Discipline and Worship, as Hearers. Proceed we now in the

Second Place, To the most eminent of the Reformed Divines *abroad*, and we shall find them as bitter against these very Persons, that are still so unhappy as to separate from us, as those we have just now mentioned were, that were born, liv’d, and for the most part taught amongst us.

The First whereof, that I shall instance in, is Monsieur *de L’Angle*, one of the Ministers of the Reformed Church meeting at *Charenton* near *Paris*, who, in his Letter to the late Bishop of *London*, dated *Oct. 31. 1680.* writeth thus.

‘ Since the Church of *England* is a true Church of our
 ‘ Lord; since her Worship and Doctrine are pure,
 ‘ and have nothing in them contrary to the Word of
 ‘ God; and since that when the Reformation was there
 ‘ received, it was received together with E P I S C O -
 ‘ P A C Y, and with the Establishment of the Liturgy,
 ‘ and Ceremonies, which are there in Use at this Day,
 ‘ it is, without Doubt, the Duty of all the Reformed of
 ‘ your Realm, to keep themselves inseparably united to
 ‘ the Church; and those that do not do this, upon Pre-
 ‘ tence that they should desire more Simplicity (or Puri-
 ‘ ty) in the Ceremonies, and less of Inequality among
 ‘ the Ministers, do certainly commit a very great Sin. †

And to this Purpose writeth Monsieur *Claude*, (Contemporary with Monsieur *de L’Angle*), another most eminent foreign protestant Divine, in one of his Letters also to the late Bishop of *London*. ‘ My Lord, says he, we
 ‘ are so very far from believing that a Man cannot live
 ‘ with a good Conscience under your Discipline, and
 ‘ your Episcopal Government, that in ordinary Practice,
 ‘ we

* The Independent Teachers, &c. † Monsieur *de L’Angle*’s Letter to the Bishop of *London*.

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we make no Difficulty either to bestow our Chairs, or to commit the Care of our Flocks to Ministers receiv'd and ordain'd by my Lords the Bishops, as might be justified by a great Number enough of Examples both old and new. And, a little while since, Mr. *Dupleffis*, that was ordain'd by my Lord Bishop of *Lincoln*, hath been established and called in a Church of this Province. And Monsieur *Wicart*, whom, you, my Lord, receiv'd to the holy Ministry, did us the Honour, but some Months ago, to preach at *Charenton*, to the general Edification of our Flock. So that they, who, in this respect, do impute unto us any Opinion distant from Peace and Christian Concord, do certainly do us wrong. And, in another Place of this Letter, saith he,

We do not believe that a single Difference of Government, or Discipline, nor ev'n a Difference of Ceremonies, innocent in their own Nature, is a sufficient Occasion to break the sacred Bond of Communion; wherefore our Churches have always look'd upon and consider'd yours (viz. the Church of *England*) not only as a Sister, but, as an elder Sister, for which we ought to have a Kindness accompanied with Respect and Veneration, and for which we do present most ardent Prayers to God without ceasing.—I shall not be afraid to give that Name to the holding of Assemblies apart, and separating from the publick Assemblies, and withdrawing themselves from under your Government: There is no Man that doth not see that this would be real Schism; which, in it self, and of its own Nature, cannot choose but be always odious to God and Man, and of which the Authors and Patrons cannot avoid the rendring an Account before the Tribunal of our common Master. When *St. Paul* forbid us the forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, he did not only condemn those that did not come thither, but stay'd at home; but those too, without doubt, that held other Assemblies in Opposition to the publick ones; for this is to break the Bond of Christian Charity, which doth not only joyn us with some of our Brethren, but with all our Brethren, to receive from them, and to give them, Edification, by living together in the same Communion.—To imagine that we cannot, with a good Conscience, be present at Assemblies, but only when we do fully and generally approve of all things in them,

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‘ it is certainly not to know either the Use of Charity,
 ‘ or the Laws of Christian Society. This Principle would
 ‘ overturn all Churches ; for, I cannot tell, whether
 ‘ there be any, whose Government, Discipline, outward
 ‘ Form, Usages, and Practices, be of such Perfection,
 ‘ that there is nothing at all in them to blame : And,
 ‘ however it be, as the Judgments of Men are very diffe-
 ‘ rent, this would be to open the Gate to continual Se-
 ‘ parations, and to abolish all Assemblies. It is there-
 ‘ fore certain that Conscience doth not oblige us to with-
 ‘ draw from the Assemblies ; but, on the contrary, it
 ‘ obligeth us to joyn with them when the Things that
 ‘ offend us are tolerable, &c. ’ * Thus far, and most
 directly to our Case, this very learned and worthy Person.

Monfieur le Moyne, Professor of Divinity at *Leyden* in
Holland, in his Letter, likewise, to the late Bishop of
London, Sept. 3. 1680. doth manifestly confirm all these
 ingenuous and excellent Passages, when he saith of our
 Church, that ‘ All good Men ought not to separate from
 ‘ her, but to look upon the Church of *England* as a ve-
 ‘ ry orthodox Church. Thus all the Protestants of
 ‘ *France* do, those of *Geneva*, those of *Switzerland*, and
 ‘ *Germany*, and those of *Holland* too ; for, they did them-
 ‘ selves a very great Honour in having some Divines of
 ‘ *England* in their Synod of *Dort*, and shew’d plainly,
 ‘ that they had a profound Veneration for the Church of
 ‘ *England* : And from whence doth it then come, that
 ‘ some *English* Men themselves have so ill an Opinion of
 ‘ her at present, and divide rashly from her as they do ?
 ‘ Is not this to divide from all the ancient Churches,
 ‘ from all the Churches of the East, from all the Prote-
 ‘ stant Churches ? — For my part, as much inclin’d to
 ‘ Toleration as I am, I cannot, for all this, persuade my
 ‘ self, that it ought to be allow’d to those that have so
 ‘ little of it to other Men ; and who, if they were Ma-
 ‘ sters, would certainly give but bad Quarter to those
 ‘ that depended upon them. I look upon these Men as
 ‘ Disturbers of the State, as well as Church, and who
 ‘ are doubtless animated by a Spirit of Sedition. Nay,
 ‘ I can scarce believe that they are just such as they say
 ‘ they are ; and I should be something afraid, that very
 ‘ dange-

* Monsieur Claude's Letter to the Bishop of London.

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‘ dangerous Enemies might be hid under Colour of these
‘ Teachers. Societies composed of such Persons would
‘ be extremely dangerous, and they could not be suffer’d
‘ without opening the Gate to Disorder, and advancing
‘ towards one’s Ruine. ’ *

Mr. *Durel* also, in another Place of his Book of Foreign Churches, speaks incomparably well to this Purpose; but, it being too long to recite here, I refer you to his Abridger, from Page the 25th.

The learned *Grotius* likewise most evidently certifies the same Truth, when he saith, ‘ I am sure that the Liturgy of the Church of *England*,—the Authority, (or Government) of their Bishops,—and many other Rites of like sort, are entirely consistent with those of the ancient Church, from which We (the Reformed) in *France* and *Holland*, cannot deny but that we have receded. ’ †

Now all these Authorities which I have laid before you are so very full and convincing to every impartial and serious Reader, that I shall give you the Judgment only of one foreign Divine more, and this the unfortunate Original and Founder of those unhappy Sects that separate from us, I mean, the famous Mr. *Calvin*, whom they still so exceedingly admire, and doat on, and so conclude this Head: But if they will allow themselves Time to examine his Writings carefully, and particularly the following remarkable Passages taken out of them, they will every Day find less Reason for admiring him, than, at present, they think they have, viz. on the account of his disliking any Church’s Liturgies, or Ceremonies, Doctrines, or Sacraments, even those of the Church of *Rome* it self not excepted, unless they be manifestly sinful, or openly vicious, as is undeniably evident from these Words of his, taken out of his Treatise *De vitandâ Superstitione*; where he saith, ‘ Let no Man think me so austere, or bound up, as to forbid a Christian, without any Exception, to accommodate himself to the Papists in any Ceremony, or Observance; For, it is not my Purpose to condemn any thing, in any

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‘ Church,

* *Monf. le Moyne’s Letter to the Bishop of London.*

† *Certum est mihi Liturgiam Anglicanam—Auctoritatem Episcoporum—multaque alia ejusmodi satis congruere Institutis vniuersalis Ecclesiae, à quibus, in Gallia, & Belgio, recessum negare non possumus. Grotius Epist. ad Voet.*

‘ Church, but what is clearly evil, and openly vicious.’ And if so, he surely doth not intend to condemn our Church, which maintains nothing in her Worship that so much as favours any thing that is either evil or vicious.

But further, he corroborates this ingenuous Concession with several other Passages in his Writings, as you will see very clearly made out, and contain’d in these following Quotations.

First, In his Book of *The true Way of Reformation*, where he saith, that ‘ he would not contend about Ceremonies, ‘ ev’n such as are symbolical, or agreeable to the Church ‘ of Rome.’

Secondly, When he saith, in another of his Books, (speaking more particularly of those Men that break in sunder the Bond of Church-Unity, which, he reckons, all do that separate from a Church that hath the Word and Sacraments regularly administred in it, as this of ours hath) ‘ No Man escapeth the due Punishment of ‘ his Divorce ; he bewitcheth himself with most pestil- ‘ lent Errors and wicked Dotages.’ *

Thirdly, When he saith, ‘ The Parish Churches being ‘ one and all of this Character, where the Word and Sa- ‘ craments are duly administred, they are such Churches, ‘ from which a godly Man may not separate. † Such a ‘ Church (adds he) in the

Fourth and last Place, ‘ is never to be cast off, tho’ it ‘ swarm full of many other Faults ; yea, tho’ some Faults ‘ creep into the Administration of Doctrine and Sa- ‘ craments.

And this I take to be his only or chief Reason, because a Rupture in the mystical Body of Christ is of worse Consequence, than keeping Communion with a Church that is not perfectly pure in its Doctrine or Worship.

And now, if this was his Judgment, and the Opinion and Practice of the most judicious and learned of that Persuasion in the late Times, as I have made it evidently appear beyond all reasonable Exception that it was, we would all of us do very well in these apostatizing Days of ours, seriously to reflect upon what they have recommended to, and warned us of, in these important Cases ;
and

* Calvin’s Instit. Lib. 4. p. 339.

† Ibid. p. 341.

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and to consider, that the better Christians any of us are, the more earnestly we ought to strive to make others so; and, we can never expect to do this, after a more uniform, regular, and acceptable Manner, than by our pious Instructions, powerful Admonitions, and godly Example, (with these truly conscientious and sincere Men) within the Pale and Communion of our established Church: For, notwithstanding this Labour of Love be somewhat grievous to Flesh and Blood, that is, to our present private Interest, or Opinions; yet, since the Publick Weal, the Spouse for which Christ died, is so mightily benefited by it, we ought, at all times, to submit our selves chearfully to it, and promote its Satisfaction and Interest all we can; assuring our selves, that every one of us shall, one Day, reap abundant Gain for all such regular and dutiful Compliances, since we have conscientiously declined our own private Interest and Satisfaction, that we might maintain and promote the Interest and Edification of the Kingdom of Christ.

And this seasonable Advice, and peaceable Conduct, is entirely consonant to what Mr. *Calamy*, another Non-conformist Minister, teacheth on the like Occasion: 'The Way to cure the Churches, says he, is not to separate from them, but to continue with them, and, by living with them, to labour to enrich and heal them.*

As also to Mr. *Baxter*, who saith, that 'by other Sins Men pull down the Church consequentially, but, by Separation, they do it directly: for by gathering Churches into distinct Bodies in Opposition, they cut the Throat of the Church.†

And truly, if bare Nature teach us to be grateful and dutiful to our natural Parents; and, on no Account whatsoever to deny them Succour, as long as we can do it without Sin; much less certainly should we abandon our Spiritual Parent, (if she happen at any Time to need our Assistance) who hath been, and is still so very tender of, and indulgent to us, as of Children of Wrath, to make us Children of Grace, and Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven.

And thus having likewise sufficiently shown the Judgment and Practice of the most learned and judicious of

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* *Cal. Serm. at Aldermanbury. 1659.*

† *His Epistle to Saints Rest.*

the late Protestant Teachers and Separatists both at home here, and abroad, in Maintainance of that which I propos'd to prove under this Second Head, I shall proceed to consider, in the

III. *Third*, and last Place, the other false Notion another Sort of Men have lately entertained against our Publick Worship and Communion, viz. whether they can justly plead (as most of them pretend to do), a *Parliamentary Indulgence* for all such unbounded Freedoms; or whether they are *thereby* authoris'd to erect and establish an Altar of Divine Worship within the Jurisdiction of an orthodox, national, established Church, in direct Opposition to it.

Now, what I shall say upon this Head, or, have already said upon any other, is with the utmost Humility and Submission to the Judgment of my Superiours, whether Ecclesiastical, or Civil, faithfully promising to own my Error when I am fairly proved to be in one.

First then, as the Church of Christ is but one entire Body, and, as a National orthodox Church is a regular Part of this Body, and all the Parts of it knit together by some external Ties, and Bonds of Union, in my humble Opinion, the Civil Power can never authorise two, or, more distinct Altars of Divine Worship in Opposition to each other. * For, where the National established Church is a regular orthodox Church, there, the Civil Power, as God's Vicegerent, is bound to protect and support it, and to use all prudent Methods to oblige every Subject to its Communion, and own its Jurisdiction; but can never authorise separate Congregations that disown its Communion, and despise its Jurisdiction, to erect a distinct Altar of Divine Worship within the known Verge of its Jurisdiction, in direct Opposition to it.

I readily grant that the Civil Power may, with the Concurrence of the Ecclesiastical, alter the Bounds of Diocesses, or, Parishes, and erect new Sees, or Parochial Congregations, for the more effectual carrying on the
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* *Deus unus est, & Christus unus est, & una Ecclesia — Aliud Altare constitui non potest; Quisquis alibi collegerit, spargit, adulterum est, impium est, quodcumque humano Favore instituitur, ut Dispositio Divina violetur.*
Cyp. ep. 40. p. 93.

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great Ends and Designs of Religion, as I have before asserted; but can never erect new ones in Opposition to the old. No; as there is but one Church, so there can be but one Way, and one Truth, and one true Altar of Worship; and every Assembly is only a Branch, or Member of it; every Soul is a Suppliant before it; and therefore, there can never be two distinct Altars of Divine Worship, nor any Law that can warrant both; one only can be true and orthodox, the other must remain irregular and sinful.

Indeed such an Attempt in the Civil Power, in my humble Opinion, is, in a direct Sense, to *divide* the Church, or Body of Christ, and usurp upon that Authority from which theirs is derived.

So that it is plain to me there can be no Indulgence which can exempt the People from their Obedience to an orthodox established national Church, or, at least, that can take away the *Guilt* of any Separations advanced in Opposition to it.

It is possible, I confess, that the Communion of an established Church may be so sinful, and the Terms of it so very unwarrantable, or unlawful (as, indeed, this of ours formerly was), that we need not the Authority of an Indulgence to make it lawful to withdraw from it. But since we may challenge any of our dissenting Brethren, (let them pretend what they please) to charge us with any Terms of Communion, or at least, to prove that any of them are, at present, † *sinful*, (altho' one leading Person among them, in the Name of all the rest, would make the World believe that they are); And, since some of the separate Congregations are advanced as *purser Ways of Divine Worship* *; or as if they were better †† edify'd than those of the orthodox established

† Dissenters Reasons, &c. p. 5, 6.

* As to this second Pretence see *John Fox*, the Nonconformist Teacher's Letter in *Fuller's Church History*, L. 9. p. 106. Where he saith 'If they prevail (that is, the Separatists), it is not to be imagined what Mischief and Disturbance they will bring, whose Hypocrisy is more subtil and pernicious than that of the Old Monks; For, under the Pretence of *greater Purity*, they will never give over 'till they have brought Men under a Jewish Slavery.

†† For this see *Monf. Le Moyne* and *de L'Angle* their two most excellent Letters abovesited, but especially, that of the former of these two worthy Divines, towards the End of it; where, taking into Consideration this third Pretence our Separatists make for separating from us, viz. for *better Edification*, he writeth thus.

' I do

blished Church ; and, upon these specious Pretences, separate from us ; all the Indulgences in the World are not sufficient to free them from the Guilt of *Schism*, ** in dividing that Body which Christ hath made but one ; and therefore, to insist upon it as a Plea of Christian Liberty for any of these Pretences, can never clear it, as the Apostle saith (1 Pet. c. 2. v. 16.) from being a Cloak of Maliciousness.

Whosoever then hath Recourse to the present Indulgence, upon any of the foregoing Accounts ; or to authorise a Separation from the established Church by reason of the Sinfulness of its Doctrine, or the Unlawfulness of any Part of its Discipline, either shamefully mistakes, or wilfully perverts the main End, and Design of it : For, to authorise a Separation from an established ortho.

‘ I do not see that their Meetings are of any great Use, or that one may be more comforted there than in the Episcopal Churches. When I was at London, almost five Years ago, I went to several of their private Assemblies to see what Way they took for the Instruction of the People, and the Preaching of the Word of God : But, I profess, I was not at all edified by it. I heard one of the most famous Nonconformists. He preached in a Place where there were three Men, and three or four score Women. He had chosen a Text about the Building of the Ruines of *Jerusalem* ; and, for the Explication of it, he cited *Pliny* and *Vitruvius* a hundred times, and did not forget to mention a Proverb in *Italian*, *Duro conduro non fa Muro*. All this seem'd to me nothing to the purpose, and very improper for the poor Women, and very far from a Spirit that sought nothing but the Comfort and Edification of his Hearers----- To cantonize themselves, and make a Schism in order to have the Liberty to vent such Vanities, is very ill Conduct, and the People seem very weak to quit their mutual Assemblies for things that so little deserve their Esteem and Preference.

** See how very bitter *Calvin* and *Beza* both are against our Dissenters, who endeavour to keep up an unreasonable Schism amongst us upon the Account of our Publick Discipline, and particularly, that Part of it, as exercised by our Bishops, as Bishops, as it is set down in *Mous. de L' Angle's* Letter before cited.

After he hath told us that ‘ Schism is the most formidable Evil that can befall the Church ----- (he says that), this was so much the Opinion of our great and excellent *Calvin*, that in his Treatise of the Necessity of the Reformation, he makes no Difficulty to say, that if there should be any so unreasonable as to refuse the Communion of a Church that was pure in its Worship and Doctrine, and not to submit themselves with Respect to its Government, under Pretence that it had retained an *Episcopacy* qualified as *Tours*, (viz. of the Church of *England*), is, there would be no Censure, nor Rigour of Discipline, that ought not to be exercised upon them. ----- (And then, a little after, he proceeds to *Beza*). And *Beza* himself, says he, who did not, in the general, approve of the *Episcopal* Government, makes such a Distinction of *Tours*, (viz. of the Church of *England*), and, is so far from believing that one may, or, that one ought to take Occasion from thence to separate from your Church, that he prays earnestly to God that she may always remain in that happy Estate in which she had been put and preserved, by the Blood, by the Purity of the Faith, and, by the wise Conduct of her excellent Bishops.

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orthodox Church by an express Law, in any of these pretended Cases, is to give the highest Encouragement to it, and is rather an undermining the orthodox established Church, than a supporting and defending it; or, in the Language of Scripture, becoming a Nursing Father, and Nursing Mother to it.

But now this is an Imputation, that cannot, with any Colour of Reason, be fixed upon a Legislative Power that are professed Members of the established Church: So that, as the present Indulgence doth not go about to infringe any of the just Rights, or Immunities of it, so it could never be intended to draw any Members away from its Communion.

The great End and only Design then of the Legislative Power, at that Time, was to give Ease to weak, erroneous and misguided Consciences, by releasing them from those Civil Penalties which former Laws had pronounced against all sorts of Separatists; but they did not in the least pretend to make, or say, that the Terms of our Communion were unlawful, or sinful; or to ex-piate either the Sins, or Guilt of the erroneous Consciences of the Separatists, by making it lawful for them to erect separate Congregations in the Bowels of our established Church; or by giving them an Occasion of withdrawing from it.

It is certain there is Sin and Guilt that may attend an erroneous Conscience, when it is not lodg'd in a State of invincible Ignorance, but enjoys proper Means of Conviction; and yet, since an erroneous Conscience is to be pursued till Conviction is wrought, the Legislative Power may suspend, or withdraw any Civil Penalties that have been pronounced against Separatists, without warranting or approving of a Separation; or altering the Case as to the *Guilt*, or *Sinfulness* of an erroneous Conscience.

I do not pretend to determine the Case, whether Civil Penalties may not sometimes be used as Means of Conviction to erroneous Consciences; for, all that is required, at present, is to show that visible Penalties may be withdrawn, without authorising separate Congregations, or opposite Altars of divine Worship.

I think it is as clear as the Day that there is no necessary Consequence in these two Arguments: (*First*), an open Separation from an orthodox established Church is sinful,
ev'n

ev'n tho' it is carried on purely by an erroneous Conscience ; therefore God hath authoris'd the Civil Power to inflict Civil Penalties upon all such Separations. Where the Antecedent is certainly true ; but there may be no more Truth, than just Cause, or Necessity, in the Consequence. Again, (2)

Tho' the Civil Power be authoris'd to inflict Civil Penalties upon an erroneous Conscience separating from an orthodox established Church ; yet if the Civil Power, after some Time, think fit to reverse the Sentence of the Law, or withdraw the Penalties from it, when they do not attain the End for which they were designed ; the Civil Power then authoriseth and approveth the Separation, and maketh it become lawful and innocent. Where the first Proposition likewise is, or may be true ; but the Consequence, or Conclusion, that is drawn from it, utterly falls ; for we may, with as much Truth, argue thus : The Civil Power, for some special Reasons, pardoneth a piece of Theft, I mean, so as to release the Criminal from the Penalties which the Law pronounceth against him ; therefore, the Civil Power authoriseth, and approveth the Fact, or taketh away the Guilt which it contracteth before God upon the Conscience : For, tho' there may not be an exact Parity in the Instances as to the Nature of the Things, yet, there is an exact Parity in the Nature of the Consequences, which is all that is desired, or contended for.

But it may be farther alledged, that the present Indulgence goeth a great deal further than the releasing of Civil Penalties, for the Magistrate is appointed to grant Licences for every separate Congregation ; and this amounts to an express Approbation of the thing it self, that is, with respect to the Lawfulness of it ; or rather, it is a direct authorising of Separation as much as that of the orthodox established Church.

But certainly, it is a gross Mistake to affirm that this Circumstance altereth the primitive Intention of the Law ; for it is manifest that the Clause for licensing dissenting Ministers, or separate Congregations, was contrived and inserted to prevent clandestine Intruders, and for the Safety of the Government, not to declare the Innocence, or *Lawfulness* of Separation : For Men were not to form Congregations at large, without the Magistrate's taking special Cognizance of the Person that was to pre-
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side in, and instruct them. It was intended likewise to prevent the Attempts of designing Men, that upon the specious Show of Religion, they might not form Assemblies, and instill poisonous Principles against the Government, and turn Religion into Rebellion, and Faith into Faction. This is abundantly manifest from those Declarations, Oaths of Fealty, and Subscriptions, that are required before Licence is granted. And certainly such strict Caution as this rather supposeth that the Legislative Power esteemed Separation to be a dangerous Evil, if not well guarded against, than asserted the Innocence, or Lawfulness of it.

It's abundantly manifest, therefore, that the Civil Power, notwithstanding any Acts of Indulgence to the contrary, hath left the Separatist to stand on his own Bottom, namely, as to the Determination of the Lawfulness, or Unlawfulness of the Separation, from the intrinsic Nature of the thing. And, if it ever was unlawful to separate from an orthodox established Church, and erect an Altar of Divine Worship in Opposition to it within the Bounds of its Jurisdiction, it remains so still, notwithstanding any Colours of Argument that may be drawn from the present Indulgence, the Design of which was only to release misguided Consciences from those Civil Penalties which former Laws pronounced against them. But further.

I am apt to think, that as our judicious Lawgivers were so discreetly charitable as to exempt Consciences truly scrupulous from the Penalties they were otherwise obnoxious to, without encouraging their Separation, or lessening their Guilt; so were they so truly charitable to those that descended from them as to give no Encouragement to a perpetual and an unreasonable Separation, that being contrary to the Design that all such regular Societies are bound to endeavour after, viz. the inestimable Blessings of Peace, Piety, Truth and Unity. For altho' our Lawgivers, since Matters were come to such a wretched pass, readily took Pity upon the poor misguided Consciences of our Forefathers; yet, they could never be induced to believe that a perpetual, and an unreasonable Separation, could either bring Glory to God, Comfort to his People, or Peace and Safety to his Vicegerents; and therefore, as they looked upon an unreasonable Separation to be a great Sin, but, as Circumstances

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then stood, thought it proper in certain Cases to wave the Penalties against it; yet, to continue it to Posterity by Force of Law, would have been looked upon to have acted Iniquity by the Power of it; and the more they encouraged their People, by this Means, to separate from the established Church, the heavier Load of Guilt, they would have thought, would have been entailed upon them, and their Posterity: * For, if an unreasonable Separation from an orthodox established Church be accounted Schism; and Schism, wilfully persisted in, hath, in all Ages of the Church, and by all Parties, been looked upon to be a damnable Sin; to transmit it to Posterity, must surely have been looked upon irrecoverably to have rent Christ's Mystical Body in pieces; and consequently, they would have thought that they had infallibly devolved upon themselves, as well as upon all those they encouraged in an unreasonable Separation, an unpardonable Sin.

And, for this Reason, it is humbly conceived, that our late Lawgivers provided that the Youth of this Kingdom should no longer be led away by the cunning Craftiness of designing Men; but, if they would continue to instruct them, they should be strictly conformable to the Rights and Usages of the Church and State, that no 'Danger, (as the Law expressed it) might ensue to either.

Hence then, we may humbly presume, that our former Lawgivers never intended to breed up Posterity in disaffected Principles to either Church, or State; because a perpetual, and an unreasonable Indulgence of them, would, they knew very well, at one Time or other, unavoidably destroy both; but only, out of a charitable and discreet Regard to Consciences truly scrupulous, and the Circumstances they were then in, exempted, especially, that very Generation, or sort of Men, from the Penalties of the Laws then in Force against all Recusants, without, if possible, any farther View. †

For,

* Wherefore St. Ignatius gives this Advice to the *Philadelphians*, and indeed, to all those Churches which he directed his several Epistles to: saying; *Μὴ πλατύνετε ἀδελφοί μου. εἰπὶ: ἡγίζοντε ἀκολουθεῖ, βασιλείαν Θεοῦ ἡ κληρονομία* Epist. ad Philad. p. 40.

† The Dissenters, where ever they prevailed, would never allow of any Toleration, but always bitterly protested against it. Witness the Kirk of Scotland ever since their Persuasion was established in that Kingdom. ----- And our own Church, when they governed here.

For

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For, to suppose otherwise, if the tumultuous Times wherein they lived would have suffered it, is to suppose them to have been Haters, and Subverters of that very Constitution, which they seem'd so industrious, and were really bound, in the strictest Ties of Conscience and Interest, manfully to maintain.

We may reasonably imagine then, that all those Persons, who, in those dreadful and dangerous Times, would have advanced, or indeed would, at any Time for the future, advance and establish their own private Opinions either upon the Ruins, and Downfall, or at the Expence and Danger of the Peace and Welfare of an established orthodox Church, are very inconsistent with themselves, as well as Imposers upon the Establishment under which they live; since, if any thing be to be got in it, (but, I hope, very few are of this base Principle, and to such People only I direct this Part of my Discourse), they will readily submit to its most sacred Acts of divine Worship, ev'n in the Courts of the Lord's House, and in the Presence of all his People.

If therefore, they think it no Sin to communicate with the Establishment, either out of Curiosity, or Interest, at some particular Times, why do they not do it always? the Nature and Purity of our Ordinances are still the same, and have not been subject to the least Shadow of Turning for several Reigns; that is, we have made no Alteration either in our Doctrine, or Discipline, for many Years; but, they are like the Laws of the *Medes* and *Persians*, which alter not. What a Shame is it then, for those Men wilfully to derive an Odium, by their gross Neglect, generally upon that, with which their Consciences can very regularly, at some particular Seasons, comply? But, if they look upon our holy Ordinances to be, in any Respect, unholy, why do they communicate with us at all?

Can their Consciences sometimes be so tender as not to come near the House, where God's Honour dwelleth,

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For this Reason, we may presume, Monsr. Le Moine is so very vehement against such sort of Men in his Letter above mentioned; when he says, 'For my Part as much inclined to Toleration as I am, I cannot, for all this, persuade my self that it ought to be allow'd to such sort of Men to handle it to other Men. &c.

Vid. also Reasons against repealing the Oath and Test Acts, &c. First Letter, p. 5. 10. and 20.

and, at other times, profanely affront him before all the Congregation? This must incline us to believe, that they either wilfully impose upon us, or that they act very inconsistently with their own Reason; and the rather, because they make the World believe, by their occasional Conformity, that our Communion may be occasionally submitted to without Sin. And, if so, it must be a great Sin in them to perpetuate Divisions, or indeed, to desire the Government to perpetuate them, at the Peril of an open Rupture in the Body of Christ, when they may submit to our Communion, and at the same time pay that Respect, which is justly due to him, and his Church, by living, as he hath enjoined us, in the Unity of the Spirit and Bond of Peace.

Thus I have giv'n you my humble Opinion of all those unaccountable Freedoms some Men are pleased to take under the Colour of the present Indulgence, and how egregiously they are all mistaken when they pretend to them upon the Account of it; seeing that it is far from encouraging any such Liberties or Freedoms as they imagine, because, in the real Nature, and Original Design of it, it respects the Prerogative of the Magistrate and Pastour, as well as the Immunities and Privileges of the People, and neither giveth Countenance to Faction in the State, nor Schism in the Church; and, consequently, he that hath Recourse to it to justify any such extravagant Doings as these, perverts the real Nature, and Design of it, and, instead of putting the things that are wanting in good Order, puts them quite out of all Order.

And now I shall close up this long Discourse with an earnest Exhortation to all our Brethren, of what Denomination soever they be, that dissent from us, to consider seriously what they have been doing in propagating the Seeds of Schism among us all this while, and to turn with all convenient Speed into the Bosom of the Church; whose Bowels have so long and grievously yearned for their Conversion; that henceforward, the Unity of the Spirit may be eternally retained in the Bond of Peace, Truth, Righteousness, and Holiness, throughout the whole Community.

And, in order to this good End, I could heartily wish that they would impartially weigh what hath been sincerely offered to them upon this Subject; and if they cannot

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cannot fairly avoid the Force of our Arguments, they know, common Justice requires them to renounce their Prejudices. Surely, it is the greatest Disparagement, that possibly can be, for a reasonable Being to stand out against the plain, and evident Convictions of Reason; or to be so very unfortunately bigotted to particular Notions, or Opinions, as fully to resolve that nothing shall prevail with them to forsake them.

I do therefore, again, and again, with the utmost Bowels of Compassion and Earnestness, beseech them to fix their Thoughts a little more upon this important Argument than they have yet done, and seriously consider the dreadful Consequences of their Proceedings; viz. whether they do not hazard the Beauty, Strength, and Order of the Christian Religion, whilst they pretend to assert those unreasonable Freedoms I have been discouraging of.

Sure I am, that that which overturns the Sanctions and Orders of an orthodox established Church, that which shatters into Parties and Factions, that which overthrows the Harmony, Order, and Unity of Christian Worship, must needs weaken or disable the common Cause of Christianity; and, to pretend any *Political Contrivances*, or *Christian Liberties* for all these pernicious Practices, is to make Christianity an Instrument of its own Ruine, and Christ the Subverter of his own Institution.

It is indisputably evident, for Men to pretend an absolute Freedom to withdraw from an orthodox established Church; to form opposite Assemblies, and dissolve them at Pleasure; at one Time to set up for a Disciple of *Cephas*; at another, of *Apollo*; and so on, in Compliance with the utmost Demands of an extravagant Fancy; I say, to do all this, is a direct Subversion of Ecclesiastical Discipline and Authority, of that Power and Government which Christ hath instituted and left in his Church for the Maintenance of Truth, Peace, Purity, and Holiness. All this is most certainly implied in every unreasonable Separation: It containeth in it the Seeds and Principles of all these fatal Consequences.

You see then that it is utterly impossible for the Ends of Religion to be carried on and advanced without those necessary Provisions. Indeed, Christ himself, our great Lawgiver, saw them absolutely necessary, and therefore he form'd his Church into a regular Society, instituted a standing Authority in it to inspect the Lives and Actions
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of his People, to encourage Virtue and suppress Vice; and, in a Word, to carry on the great Ends and Designs of Religion, by fixing every thing according to the excellent Rules of Order and Uniformity. But now it is undeniably manifest that these wild Notions of Separation overturn the whole OEconomy, and reduce the Church of Christ from a regular Body, or Society, into a confused disjoynted Multitude: For, by this Means, the beautiful Spouse of Christ is quite disfigured; and, instead of a living, and perfectly sound Body, (where every Part, or Member is fitly compacted by its proper Bonds and Ligatures, and jointly nursed up by a Principle of Life diffused through the whole), becometh like a lifeless and mangled Body, * bleeding out its Vitals; or rather, like an assassinated Person, not only bereaved of all her Beauty, Form, and Comeliness; but torn piece-meal, and her Joynts, or Members, *scattered*; (as the Psalmist expresseth it), as when one cutteth and cleaveth Wood upon the Earth, Psal. 141. 7. All this will an unreasonable and groundless Separation do in the Mystical Body of Christ in Time, as really, as a Sword, a Lion, or the wild Boar out of the Forest, will dismember, and tear in pieces a natural Body: and therefore let Men impartially reflect upon that dismal Train of Guilt and Mischief, to which they infallibly contribute, that enter upon such unbecoming and tremendous Practices. Let them consider, whether they do not thereby obstruct the Advancement of Truth, Peace, Purity, and Holiness; whether they do not lay a Temptation before Heathens and Unbelievers to ridicule and blaspheme the very Name of Christ; whether they do not lay open the broad Way to Libertinism and Freethinking, and leave Men to the impetuous Sallies of their own ungovernable Lusts and Imaginations, and, consequently, introduce the grossest Immoralities; and at last, tempt them to throw off, in the most disbecoming and prophane Manner, all Religion: at least these are the natural Consequences of all such unbounded Liberties or Freedoms: And all this will make up but a very sorry Reckoning, or a most dismal Indictment, wherever it happens to be fixed.

For this Reason, no doubt, doth St. Clement expostulate so very severely with the Schismatical Corinthians of his Time,

* *Magnum & gloriosum Corpus Christi conscindunt, & quantum in ipsis est, interjiciunt.* 2^a N. L. 4. c. 53 & 62.

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Time, and passionately dissuade them from their unnatural Divisions; when he saith, 'Why are there Contentions, 'Strife, Schism, and War among you? have we not one 'God, and one Christ, and one Holy Ghost, which hath 'been shed forth upon every one of us? Why therefore 'do we take the Members of Christ and pull them to 'pieces, moving Sedition against our own Body, and arriving to that Height of Madness and Folly, as to deny 'that we are Members one of another? Remember the 'Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, which pronounceth a 'Woe against those by whom Offences come; saying, 'that it were better that they had never been born than 'that one of the Elect should be thus offended.' And, to let them see the most fatal Effects and destructive Consequences that necessarily attend these base Practices, says he, 'Your Schism hath perverted many, hath made 'many despond, and greatly grieved us all, and yet it 'doth not cease:—(Nay), by reason of your Indiscretion and Folly, the Name of God is (openly) blasphem'd, 'and your selves brought into the utmost Danger.' †

Since then so many dreadful Evils are apparently lodged in the Womb of Separation, and since it intail-eth a complicated Guilt and Mischief upon the unworthy Authors of it, I wou'd earnestly advise them to try all Methods to deliver themselves from it; and, therefore, let them descend to a strict Scrutiny within their own Breasts, and seriously examine what it is that makes them overrule the clearest Arguments and Convictions, and adhere to espoused Notions and unjustifiable Practices; and, if possible, to quit them out of Hand; because, they are always to remember that it is the Devil's Master-piece and grand Design to divide and crumble us into Parties and Factions; and therefore, it highly concerns them to keep a vigilant Eye upon themselves, lest he unexpectedly get an Advantage over them, and buoy them up in their dangerous Errours, by blowing up in them either a Spirit of *Pride and Obstinacy*, or of *Confusion and Inequality*, the Spirit too commonly prevailing in this wicked World, *† whereby he worketh in the Children of Disobedience, and leadeth them captive at his Will.

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† *Clement, 1 Ep. ad Cor. p. 60, 61, 62.*

*† *Hi sunt Oris atque Conatus Schismaticorum male cogitantium, ut sibi placeant, ut Insuperbum superbo Tumore contemnant; sic de Ecclesia receditur, sic Altare prophetum foris collocatur, sic contra Pacem Christi, & Ordinationem, atque Unitatem Dei rebellatur. Cypr. Ep. 65. Sect. 4. p. 193.*

It is true, the invincible Answer to all Arguments of this Nature is Zeal for Christian Liberty; but, if it should prove to be acted by these false Principles, Liberty is then but a Cloak of Maliciousness. I am sure, such exorbitant Outcries for Liberty are the great Inlet to Licentiousness, and consequently tend to the Subversion not only of Christian Immunities, but of Christianity itself.

It is Concord, Peace, and Unity, that must strengthen and advance the Cause of Christianity, and consequently, most effectually maintain the Privileges of a Christian.

Had this National Church an absolute Possession of the Hearts and Hands of all their People, so as to make Profession of one Body of Faith, and freely to submit to one Discipline, and cordially join in one Communion, or Form of Divine Worship, it would not only cast a Terror, but Reverence into all foreign Adversaries; It would make them dread all wicked Attempts, that might otherwise be form'd to embroil the Peace of our *Jerusalem*; It wou'd secure its Peace and Prosperity amidst the blackest Storms and Hurricanes; and, like the House that was built upon the Rock, tho' the Wind rise, and the Waves swell and beat against it never so violently, it wou'd still remain firm and unshaken.

Therefore, instead of endeavouring to assert such unreasonable Freedoms as make us break into Parties, and fly at a Distance from one another, let us all, with the Psalmist, go into the House of the Lord together as Friends, and pray for the Unity and Peace of *Jerusalem*; and, with that Primitive Saint and Father just now mentioned, if any of us have been guilty of the great Sin of Schism and Separation, repent, and say; ' If through my Means there hath been Sedition, Contention, and Schism, ' I will remove and depart whithersoever you please, ' and will do whatsoever shall be commanded me by any ' of you, provided the Flock of Christ may live in Peace, ' and Unity under their proper Pastours. * And then would our established Church, as well as that at *Corinth*, which was so very earnestly desired in this Epistle, be as a City that is at Unity within itself; and this wou'd bring Peace within her Walls, and Plenteousness within her Palaces; therefore, *pray for the Peace of Jerusalem; for they shall prosper that love Thee.*

* Clem. 1 Ep. ad Cor. p. 69.

